filmindia

MARCH 1945

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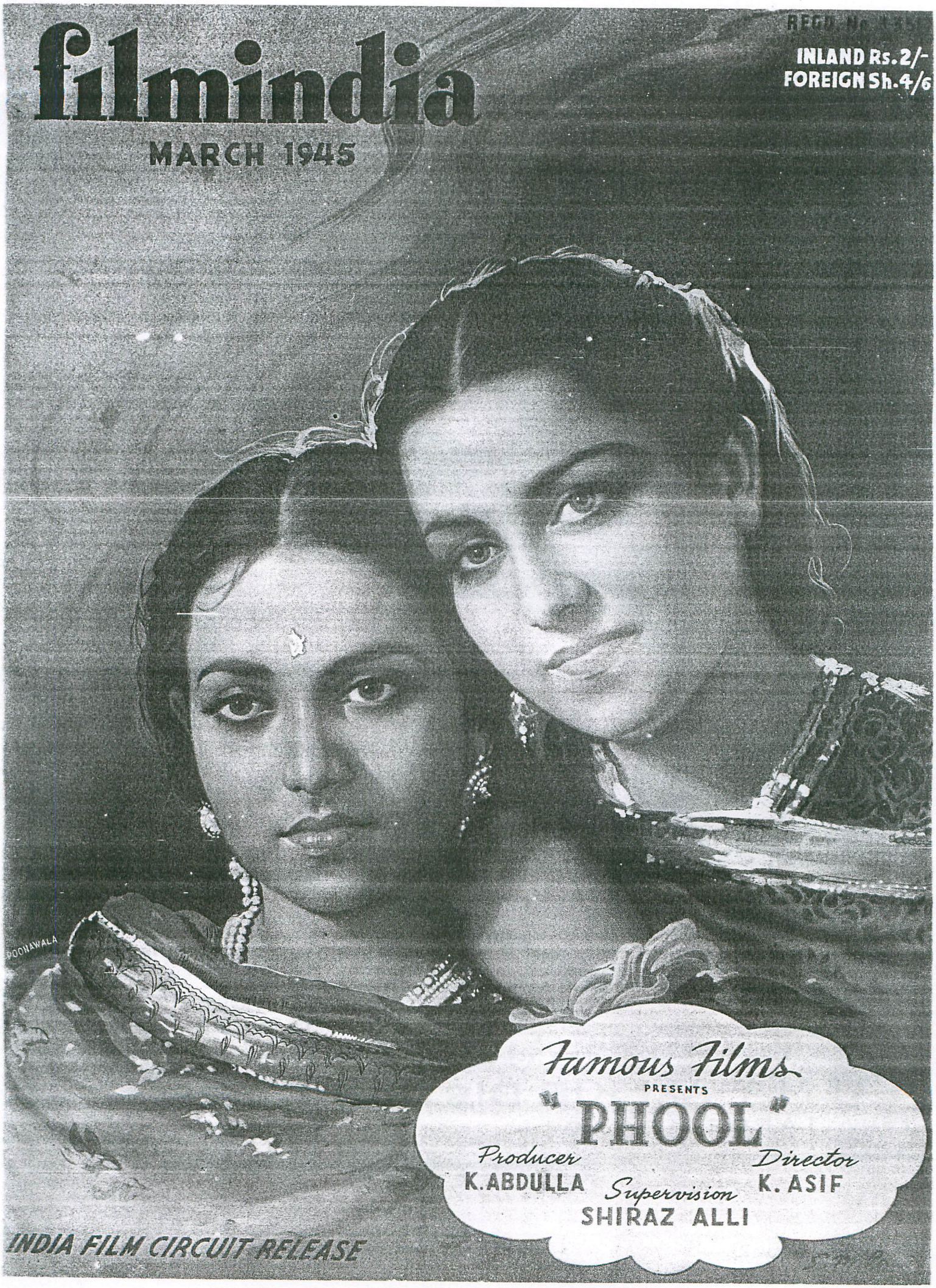

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NOOR JEHAN

WITH

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DIXIT, MAJID, BIBBO & SHAH NAWAZ

DIALOGUES:
VAJAHAT MIRZA

DIRECTION:
SHAUKAT HUSAIN

MUSIC:
MIR SAHEB

SONGS:
MEHRUL KADRI
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FEATURING:

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David ★ **Charlie**

Agha Jan ★ **Arbinda Sen**

Sunalini Devi ★ **Kusum Deshpande**

and ★ **K. C. DE** ★

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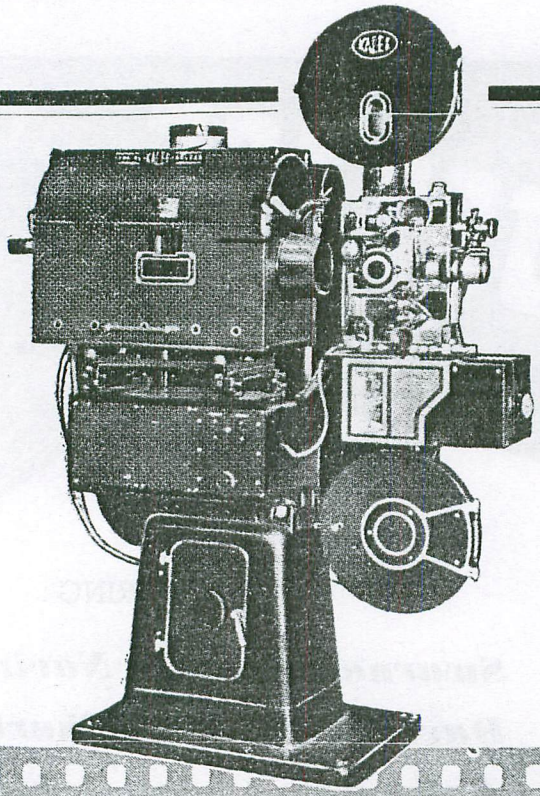
Produced & Directed by

Phani Majumdar



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filmindia

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No Black-Market In Licenses!

It is very amusing to note the numerous controversies in the papers in official circles and in producers' associations over the so-called "Black-Marketing Of Licenses."

Whatever black-marketing may be existing in other items of motion picture production, the present trade in licenses is certainly not black-marketing. If this trade is to be labelled as black-marketing, then the long shameful history of motion picture finance since the inception of the industry must be called blackmailing.

Right from the beginning, since the day Father Phalke produced his first picture, the artistic worker has had to depend entirely on the heartless financier. During the last thirty years, not one executive worker who directly creates the product has founded a single production company with his own money. The reason has been simple. The worker never had money. And this is where the financier always stepped in with his impossible terms of finance, which kept the executive producer poor and, therefore, constantly at the mercy of the tin-god. This financial blackmailing is an old tumour of the industry and evidence of this cancerous growth can be found in the existence of several distributing firms all over the country —firms not having even a distant relationship with art and the artistic, yet continuously finance different productions and not only secure for themselves the complete control of the productions but also misappropriate under different excuses all the profits of the picture.

The so-called 'Black-Marketing Of Licenses', does not differ in fundamental principles from the thirty-year old familiar blackmail of the financiers.

At no stage during the last thirty years did the executive worker ever have money of his own. He had always to go to the financier. The executive worker is in the same status today and whether the license is begged. borrowed, stolen or purchased, the executive worker has still to go to the present-day financier if the ultimate product is at all to be created.

Assuming for the sake of argument that there are legitimate license-holders as against the illegitimate ones. may we know how many legitimate license-holders produce motion pictures without the help of outside financiers—financiers who do not know even the alphabet of motion picture making? Outside finance is therefore a family disease of the industry.

The so-called 'Black-Marketing Of Licenses', is nothing else but another process of securing finance wherewith the ultimate product is created. No amount of restrictions, official or unofficial, can prevent this trade. Looked at from the strictly legal and moral points of view, trading-in a license for commercial benefits cannot be an offence in law, if selling a picture outright during any stage of production, from before the 'muhurt' till after the release. is a legal transaction. The Government has no right whatsoever to interfere with a production license and its disposal, once the same is granted to the producer. The Government can take all the precautions on grounds of suitability and other reasons, before granting the license to a producer. But having done so, it cannot legally interfere with the rights attached to the license as the license becomes a valuable commercial commodity and as such a vital asset of business.

It is highly preposterous that the Government should try to interfere with the inside routine of the industry by

Sadhona Bose is reported to have given some new dances in "Vish Kanya", a Ranjit fantasy.

imposing impossible restrictions on the producer, merely because the producer has to eat out of the official hands during the war times.

The present restrictions imposed by the Government, though well-intentioned, are puerile and frivolous. Any producer can legally contract with any financier to produce a picture on any license despite all the restrictions, and all the Defence Rules in the country cannot stop the producer from doing so.

By the way, we cannot understand what business it is of the Government to interfere with the commercial routine of the industry. Production licenses were introduced with the solitary idea of regulating and rationing raw film supplies so that the maximum number of producers are benefited from the minimum supply of raw films. This was the only spirit of the Licensing Order of the Government. So far as the authorities are able to regulate the supplies and direct them into correct consumer channels, they have no reason to be extra-nosy by imposing restrictions on the industry in general.

The present licensing restrictions, which impose their woeful limitations after the grant of the license, smell of Fascism and State Control. However well-meant the restrictions may be, it is not democratic for the Government to interfere with a commercial industry which has to struggle and survive in the midst of competition and general apathy.

We admit that the Government has been trying to do the best of a very bad job in the primary granting of the licenses. But in imposing subsequent restrictions, it is stepping beyond its inherent authority.

Owing to the numerous dissensions existing between the producers and due to the type of people that constitute our film industry, the job of granting licenses is certainly a thankless task for the authorities concerned. As industrialists, Indian producers have a shameful reputation and the Government officers often do not know where a lie ends and a truth begins.

Under such circumstances, it is necessary to formulate a mechanical system for granting the production licenses, reserving special powers to refuse such licenses in suspicious circumstances. Any strong action taken by the authorities in such cases, after full investigation, will always be supported by us. But we certainly refuse to be a party to the illegal interference which the new restrictions are bound to cause in the film industry.

It will be a good idea to prepare a register either of executive producers or directors, preferably with a past record of work, on a certain date and then grant a license per head per executive per director for a period of six months. If this method is adopted, mushroom producers who set up booby boys as new directors will be eliminated in a day and the real worker would be directly benefited. Established studios will not lose anything in this procedure because for every officially recognised director whom they employ they will manage to get one license during six months.

If this method is adopted, hardly fifty motion picture directors all over India would be able to obtain official recognition either due to past record or present suitability. In any case it is an idea worth trying if the Government wishes to improve the contents and quality of our motion pictures.

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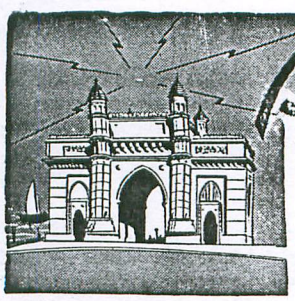

Bombay Calling

This section is the monopoly of "JUDAS" and he writes what he likes and about things which he likes. The views expressed here are not necessarily ours, but still they carry weight because they are written by a man who knows his job.

CAN'T WE BEHAVE?

Every day I feel more and still more ashamed of belonging to the Indian film industry. This sense of shame strikes me forcibly in the face when I hear people on the race-course and at the theatres speaking contemptuously about our film actors and actresses.

And I don't blame these people from the outside world, because I also see what they see whenever I happen to pick up a group of film artistes on the race-course every Saturday.

I must confess that most of our film artistes utterly lack respectability. And it is a shameful confession because I would love to say otherwise where people from our film industry are concerned.

Our film artistes, especially those who go to the race-course, bar a couple of exceptions, seem to forget the important fact that the race-course is a public place where thousands watch the puerile and shameful antics of our film stars. The way some of these stars behave gives one the impression that they are not normal persons.

One particular group of half-a-dozen film girls and as many boys is particularly notorious on the race-course for their frivolous behaviour and wild abandon. Members of this group often get drunk long before the last race is run and then the world sees some shameless necking and petting which even gay lotharios would not indulge in except in the privacy of their bed-rooms.

No one objects to our film artistes being sporting and chummy especially on a race-course where good sport is the chief menu of the day. But in being so is it necessary to lose all sense of decency and respectability? And is it necessary to be loud and vulgar in personal behaviour?

These film boys and girls (most of them are bad fathers and quiet mothers) don't seem to realise that they become a bad advertisement to the Indian film industry when they indulge in such abnormal behaviour. It is quite true that some of them have made good money during these days but is it necessary to celebrate their success by such an indecent and outlandish method of individual expression?

For years I have seen the very same pattern of behaviour from these film vulgarians at almost all public places and though these people often claim good birth and education, I have come to entertain a shrewd suspicion that most of these persons behave like just so many base-born mongrels, who forget their birth and culture in the very first intoxication of success.

If some of these vulgar performers hear what the ordinary Bhendi Bazar bloke thinks of them after seeing their race-course antics, they wouldn't expose themselves so readily before the public. A popular remark often heard is "Sali filmwalli rundi hain".

Is it any wonder that our film people get a bad name because our show-boys and show-girls on whom we spend millions to present them as heroes and heroines in our motion pictures, let us down so badly in their personal behaviour?

WASTING FILM ON DANCERS!

There is a lot to be said in favour of the ancient dancing art of India. Great artistes like Uday Shankar, Ram Gopal, Menaka, Sadhona Bose, Rukmini Arundale, etc., have been dancing on every wooden floor throughout the country to revive our ancient art of dancing. All glory to these pioneers who have harnessed their zeal for art with a commercial eye and made it a profitable pleasure.

But when they try to build a motion picture round the ancient art of dancing, they are certainly carrying their zeal a bit too far. All dancing pictures have always failed whether in India or in Hollywood. Three Indian pictures which were entirely built round a dancer, "Raj Nartaki", "Kum Kum" and "Paigham", failed to get the popular vote and became production liabilities.

Surendra and Sitara come together after a long time in "Parinde", an Atre Picture.

Beauty Queen

VEENA

AND

MOTILAL

AND

BABURAO PENDHARKAR

IN

MAZHAR ART

PRODUCTIONS'

MUSLIM COSTUME PICTURE

"PEHLI NAZAR"

Story, Dialogues & Songs:

DR. SAFDER AH SITAPURI

Music:

ANIL BISWAS

(By Courtesy of Bombay Talkies)

Dances:

LACHHU MAHARAJ

(Son of late Maharaj Kalka Binda Deen)

Supported By

MUNNAWER SULTANA, BIBBO, NEMO (New Theatres), BIMLA DEVI, MOGUL, LALITA and a new face

PARVEEN

Produced & Directed by

MAZHAR KHAN

Assistant Director : **ASLAM NOORI**

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No audience in the world likes too much of anything, least of all a big dose of our classical dancing which is at all times boring to the average person in the audience.

We are now threatened with two more dancing pictures—one from Uday Shanker and the other from the untiring Sadhona Bose.

We do not think that either of these is going to click at the box-offices, unless their producers succeed in covering their dance motif completely with an unusually strong story of romance.

Whatever the ultimate fate of these two pictures, and it is hardly in doubt, there is no sense in producing such all-dance motif pictures merely because we have Sadhonas, Menakas, Shankers, Ram Gopals and others as our well-known dancers.

The right field for these artistes is the stage where their individual art gets good time and scope for its expression not to mention a specialised audience which brings plenty of patience with a pseudo-intellectual understanding of the ancient art of dancing.

But in the case of motion pictures, masses in general decide the true worth of art. And our masses, as we find them today, may just spit in boredom at the artistic antics of our several dancing bipeds.

We definitely think that the raw film used on our dancing films is a huge waste which we can ill-afford in these days of shortage, because these dancing pictures are likely to fail in the primary purpose of every motion picture—mass entertainment.

CANCELLATION OF LICENSES!

We hear a number of protests about the cancellation of licenses granted to different producers during the 1944 year. A couple of leading producers are affected by this cancellation and it is but natural that several paid pipers should make a lot of noise about this affair.

We cannot, however, blame the authorities in this regard. The idea of licensing productions was introduced on the fundamental principle of regulating the supplies of raw films. The Government undertook to regulate the raw supplies of a fixed number of pictures within a fixed period of time. It was up to the producers, who had the privilege of claiming their allotted licenses, to consume their quota by regulating their production work within the time allowed to them.

If, for reasons of their own, these producers could not complete their previous productions in time they would naturally put the regulating system out of stride by claiming their license months later after its original due date. The position of the authorities must also be considered with regard to these licenses. After granting the production license the authorities reserve so much of raw stock for a particular producer to be consumed during a fixed period of the year. Immediately this production stock is consumed, the subsequent arrangements for the supply of stocks for positive films have to be again made within a specific time limit. The raw stock supply cannot be regulated and controlled efficiently if the producers are allowed to turn the control methods into a fluid affair.

It is really amusing to find a lot of shouting and weeping done over these license cancellations by producers who own their own studios. In comparison with the gipsy producers who carry the burden of their business on their shoulders from studio to studio and do not know when

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Directed by
RAM DARYANI
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and where they will get the next shooting day, the studio-owning producers should be in a position to regulate their work in such a manner as to complete their productions in time. If they fail to do so, they cannot blame the authorities for cancelling their overdue licenses.

We cannot, however, understand why people are given allotments for more pictures than they can actually produce. "Filmistan" took nearly two years producing their first picture and in doing so proved its production speed beyond dispute. May we know how many licenses are granted to "Filmistan" for the 1945 production season?

THE DEATH OF A DOLL

Lupe Velez, the original Mexican spitfire, is dead. Carmen Miranda, another Mexican spitfire, who stole the thunder from Lupe is also dead. Now there must not be any spitfire left in Mexico—at the most some bush fire for which Mexico was noted long before its women trekked for Hollywood.

Guadaloupe Velez de Villalobos—Lupe Velez to you all, was a colourful personality. Even Hollywood was scared of her. One Lupe could make that quiet Californian suburb a mad town of Bohemian orgies. Lupe was irresistible and yet boldly original.

Lupe Velez.

She lived in a Spanish mansion, bathed in a jade-green tub, slept in a bed which was eight feet square and was courted by many handsome men. Perhaps the very size of the bed invited so many of them.

Her bed-room had a refrigerator and bar and an oyster white rug, often littered with phonograph records or clothes. She liked to be interviewed in bed and sometimes leaped from the covers in a transparent night gown to admire herself in the mirror. (Only journalists with Zabak's glass-eye could be safe at such moments.). Sometimes at parties she raised her dress neck high, to show that she had a compact little body and a magnificent over-all tan.

As Lupe Velez she led a strange and unfettered existence—even for the riotous Hollywood. She was very young when she became famous. Her whims and appetites, her shallow fits of rage and delight remained unchanged. She loaded herself with outlandish jewellery. She delighted in entering night-clubs with a spurious dignity and often spat out oaths like an angry cat. Lupe was tropical and temperamental in the extreme.

For five years she remained married to Johnny Weissmuller, that swimmer-actor, but the world knew of her marriage through endless quarrels and reconciliations. Then she got a divorce from Johnny and provided a marathon chase to a chain of new lovers.

Just a few months before her death, she fell in love with Harald Ramond, a handsome Continental with a war record. Soon Lupe became pregnant and though other ways and means were entertained, Lupe could not bring herself to accept them.

An accident which happens every minute to thousands of women in India, distressed the tropical Lupe. One night at 3-30 a.m., she whistled for her dogs and undressed to step into blue silk pyjamas, sat down on her huge bed to scribble a note. In her childish scrawl she wrote: "Harald, May God forgive you and forgive me too, but I prefer to take my life away and our baby's before I bring him in with shame or killing him."

Then she climbed between her white silk sheets, arranged her blonde hair in a circle on the pink silk pillow. Hastily she swallowed an overdose of sleeping pills.

Next morning the first policeman to arrive said: 'She looked so small in that outsize bed that we thought at first she was a doll."

In that bed there was place enough for many young men, but not for a little baby who had hoped before its birth for a little lebensraum.

GOOD NAMES PAY!

Film fans often ask me why some of the film stars change their original names and adopt a screen name. But few people realize that people have very often such odd names that it is difficult to glamorise them for screen purposes.

Mrs. Khursheed Mirza, the quiet well-behaved wife of a police Superintendent, is the glamorous "Renuka Devi" to us and so is Mrs. Shaida Abdulla known to millions as "Neena". And that big cat amongst the actors, "Chandramohan" was called Watal and goodness knows what that meant. "Vanmala" is in life Mrs. Sushila Sawant and "Madhuri" is really Miss Beryl Claessen. And the inimitable "Charlie" was born Nur Mahomed.

Who says that we are not progressing? Our stars are now stepping into the bath-tubs as seen in "Phool", a picture of Famous Films.

The story is the same in Hollywood. Many well-known stars were born with unromantic-sounding names. For instance: Eddie Cantor (Iz. Iskowitch), John Garfield (Julius Garfinkle), Edward G. Robinson (Emmanuel Goldenberg), Claudette Colbert (Claudette Chauncion), Rita Hayworth (Margaret Cansino) and Mary Astor (Lucille Langhanke).

It would be strange to find a film starring Alexander Archibald Leach (Cary Grant) or Virginia Katherine McMath (Ginger Rogers).

Screen's 'bad men' have often found their real names unsuitable. William Henry Pratt is known as "Boris Karloff". Bela Lugosi Blasko is "Bela Lugosi" in his films.

Of all people Hedy Lamarr was christened Hedwig Eva Maria Kreisler. With that jaw-breaking cradle name Hedy would not have looked half as beautiful as she does today.

After all there is something in a name and our naming the film stars is not exactly so much moonshine madness.

Years back someone met a telephone-operator of Bombay, Ruby Myers, and called her "Sulochana" and that name brought in millions to the producers.

YOU'LL HARDLY BELIEVE.—

That the urgent meeting of the Film Advisory Committee held recently at New Delhi conducted its business in the English language compelling the Producers' Association to send "gentle" Jamsu Wadia in place of Mr. V. Shantaram, who is more at home when proceedings are argued in Marathi.

That Publicity-pup Thackeray thinking that "gentle" Jamsu was going to the Mars, sent a newspaper circular of Jamsu's trip to Delhi. We would like to know whether "gentle" Jamsu has returned intact or not.

That V. Shantaram did not mind being replaced by "gentle" Jamsu because Jamsu comes from the same yard—V. Shantaram's and Rajkamal's. So long as "gentle" Jamsu carries this well-known trade-mark, he can go to New Delhi or to Hades and return after completing a "Radium" Jubilee.

That the latest jubilee to be celebrated in motion pictures is the "Radium Jubilee" through which Shantaram's "Shakuntala" recently passed. Now Jayashree definitely becomes Madam Curie of India. When she found Shantaram she did discover some motion picture radium, though another woman had made the discovery long before her.

That there is no hope of "P. P. A. Dera" going through this new "Radium" test as the budget will mount up to several lakhs to run the picture at the Novelty in Bombay.

That since Dewan Sharar sported the Mandarin's disguise in "Dr. Kotnis", people have been calling on him to buy opium. The blighters don't know that all that Dewan Saheb can offer is good Scotch.

That Khwaja Ahmed Abbas becomes a little Manchu in "Dr. Kotnis" and keeps tickling Zabak, the glass-eyed "journalist", who acts as the chief of the barmaids in Nanking.

That in the midst of all this super-educated talent, Shantaram happens to be the only guy without university education. It is said that he explains to himself his action in Marathi and Abbas kindly translates it into Hindustani, for the great director's benefit.

That Chandulal Shah once again threatens to close down his studios if the Government do not listen to him in the matter of issuing new licenses.

That several I.C.S. Officers have been waiting in deputation at Chandulal's studio gates requesting him to revise his fatal decision—fatal to the Government. Now that "Sunbathing" has won the Obaidullah Khan Cup at Mahaluxmi, Chandulal would not mind continuing with the production of Ranjit sausages.

That people wonder when and how Producer P. M. Jhaveri works on his licensed productions as they find him everywhere dressed in silks with nothing weighing on his mind—not even the problem of motion picture finance.

That incidentally Producer Jhaveri manages to turn out more pictures per year than several others with studios of their own. His secret, everytime, is worth a lakh and a half in these days and cannot be told so easily.

That Producer Jhaveri's new picture is "Meghdoot" directed by Debaki Bose, shot at Supreme Studios and starring Leela Desai. If you don't believe, go and watch Jhaveri signing the shooting notices with his own fountain pen.

That when you ask Producer Jhaveri who wrote "Meghdoot", he says Debaki Bose wrote it and Chunibhai purchased it for him. The only "Kalidas", Jhaveri knew was the one who, years back, insured film studios against fire. He lived at Chowpatty. Since then no other Kalidas has entered the film industry.

That Producer Jhaveri is very pleased with the Government and their licensing of film productions otherwise poor Jhaveri had no chance of knowing where New Delhi was situated. Now the secretaries can't keep him out of the Secretariat as Jhaveri knows all the entrances.

After a pretty long time, pretty Renuka Devi comes to the screen in "Ghulami", a picture of Shalimar.

That Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall is in a furious temper because that "little chap in New Delhi" has revoked his last year's license without even acknowledging Rai Bahadur's ancient friendship with Sir Akbar Hydari and the rest of the Knights of New Delhi.

That Rai Bahadur doesn't mind losing ten licenses or for that matter even closing down "Filmistan" provided people do things with correct form and decorum.

That Producer S. Mukherjee (of C. C. R. Naujawan fame) has planned another marathon production, spread over four years this time, and is looking out for some one who has that long patience to finance.

That in the meanwhile Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall has notified from his office in Fort to his Producer in Goregaon (at present Mukherjee) that the next picture of "Filmistan" must be ready within four months. Rai Bahadur has also arranged with Kapurchand for simultaneous releases in Bombay and Calcutta.

That Kapurchand seems a bit fed up with Kevalya (affectionately said in temper) seeing that the Roxy in Bombay has been contracted out to some one with so much on paper and so much below the paper every week for a year. Kapurchand is such a lucky guy that even without a picture, his empty theatre will pay profits.

That a Calcutta newspaper report says that many dancers from Manipur have these days settled down in Calcutta. Is that the reason why Kevalchand wants to organise his Calcutta business in person? High time Kapurchand starts reading Calcutta papers. He may some day read what Chhotubhai Desai, his branch manager, lost in cards overnight.

That having covered the entire cost of "Humayun" by selling Bombay and C. P. C. I. Circuits, Mehboob is now looking out for some one who will buy the other provinces —quietly, without much fuss.

That theatres in Bombay are going to be more scarce in future just because capitalistic blast walls are being erected round them and pictures won't find the entrance gates which will only open with the golden key.

That Mrs. Devika Rani Rai, the mother of 400 'boys', is worrying these days about the silver jubilee of "Jwar Bhata". We don't see what there is to worry seeing that "Kismet" profits are still coming in.

That this Jubilee Problem has been very neatly solved by two leading Producers—Mr. Shantaram and Mrs. Rai, though the former has now added 'Radium' to 'Silver', "Gold" and "Diamond". What about a Nickel Jubilee for the next B. T. picture?

That H. M. V. Chaturbhuj Doshi wonders why one of the venomous virgins did not kiss Kedar Sharma during the shooting of "Vish-Kanya" and stopped that small piping voice flattering Boss Chandulal. The reason, perhaps, was that Kedar being short in stature could never raise his eyes above the knee-level and the legs were not poisonous in "Vish-Kanya". They were just ugly.

That Pandit Indra, screen's most persistent writer, knows exactly what every one in the north understands in dialogues and dishes out his knowledge to different producers, from day to day. Marvellous, how Panditji can be so worldly-wise seeing that he has never gone out of Marwar. But then he has read books by Munshi Premchand. The Punjabi, however, know only the Shikarpuri Munshi whom Kardar introduced in "Sharda".

That Pandit Indra also writes gazals for Bombay's motion pictures, but it is another story that the Muslims don't spot them as such. The average Punjabi who would like to find a girl in a gazal and a gazal in a girl can't find both in Panditji's gazals and thus goes sex-starved throughout a picture. That is rather hard on the gallant Punjabi.

That Producer-Director Jayant Desai's new comedy "Chandragupta" is at last on the screen in Bombay. Jayant, however, wonders why people don't laugh. They do, old boy, but not in the theatre.

That Principal P. K. Atre is reported to have been completely cured of "Draupadi", the tropical ailment which put him in bed for months. We saw him at the Races the other day looking half of his previous self.

That Director P. K. Atre is now learning the rudiments of motion picture direction from Vanmala who gives a running commentary based on her experience in "P. P. A. Dera" under the great Shantaram. It is a domestic secret that Atre now repents for ever agreeing to lend Vanmala's services to that Kolhapuri fellow.

That Mohanlal G. Dave, the Arabian-Night-tale-spinner of the Indian movies, has at last acquired a twin-brother in Prabhulal Dwivedi, the Bhangwadi scribe, who

If you didn't see enough of Kamla Chatterjee last month, here is some more of her from "Caravan", a Ranjit picture. Who says that our women are starved at home?

has now begun yielding a new crop of screen stories, beginning with "Aina".

That Gold-medal Vijoo seems to have lost his nerve these days the way we hear of the shootings and the re-shootings of "Vikramaditya". Perhaps Vijoo is affected by Mukherjee-phobia.

That when Sohrab Modi ("moody" seth according to the Pathan at the gate) presented Mehtab to the Formbys as the ideal representative of beauty on the screen, Comedian George is reputed to have said "Really?" But 'Moody' Seth didn't understand and replied "Really, Sir!" Did George, by any chance, think of Buster Keaton in a sari?

That there is not the least doubt that dear old George Formby takes a lot of humour out of real life, besides making the world laugh. Seeing a set of "Ek Din ka Sultan" he was surprised to learn that it was a product of Russi Banker's dream. George was tickled at the idea of a dream coming true. Later, someone told George that Russi was a bachelor and he had nothing else to dream about.

That having completed "Samrat Ashok" in record time, Baburao Pendharkar is now expected to invite people of the industry to a gala premiere of the picture with a cock-tail party thrown in to maintain family traditions. It is going to be a banquet for the Atres and Gadres of Marathi journalism.

That Raja Pandit, (sometimes called Mr. Ratnamala) is already seen in full intoxication of the success of "Samrat Ashok". He was recently found in the "Radium Jubilee" spirit at the Bombay Races. That way Raja has always been a loyal friend to Pendharkar sharing all the joys and sorrows of life together.

That Director Vijoo Bhatt is very pleased with Baburao Pendharkar's work in "Vikramaditya". Which means that Pendharkar is in the danger of getting one of those gold medals for which Vijoo is famous.

That Producer Abdul Rashid Kardar has lost Sadiq and is wondering how to replace him to maintain an intellectual appearance before the other producers.

That the residential quarters of several film stars staying in Dadar and Matunga have these days become veritable gambling dens where thousands are won and lost in card games. It's a case of easy come, easy go.

That our film artistes are becoming as good gamblers as our film producers and many a book-maker at the Bombay Races has realised this truth with some painful memories.

That Producer Sohrab Modi won a court suit against Film-actress Meena and got her to work for the Minerva Studios. People now want to know in what particular Minerva picture Meena is now working.

That down in Andheri, there is a film company called Ramnik Productions, but no one really knows what they do with their several production licenses and in what part of India their pictures are screened.

That Producer-director Bhal Pendharkar threatens to produce the Indian version of "King Henry the Eighth" of course, with himself in the title role.

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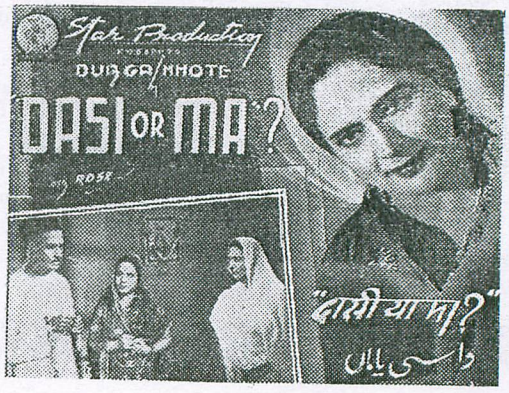

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Music: MUSTAQ HUSSEIN

Dialogues & Songs: WAHID QURESHI

Director: RAMNIK DESAI

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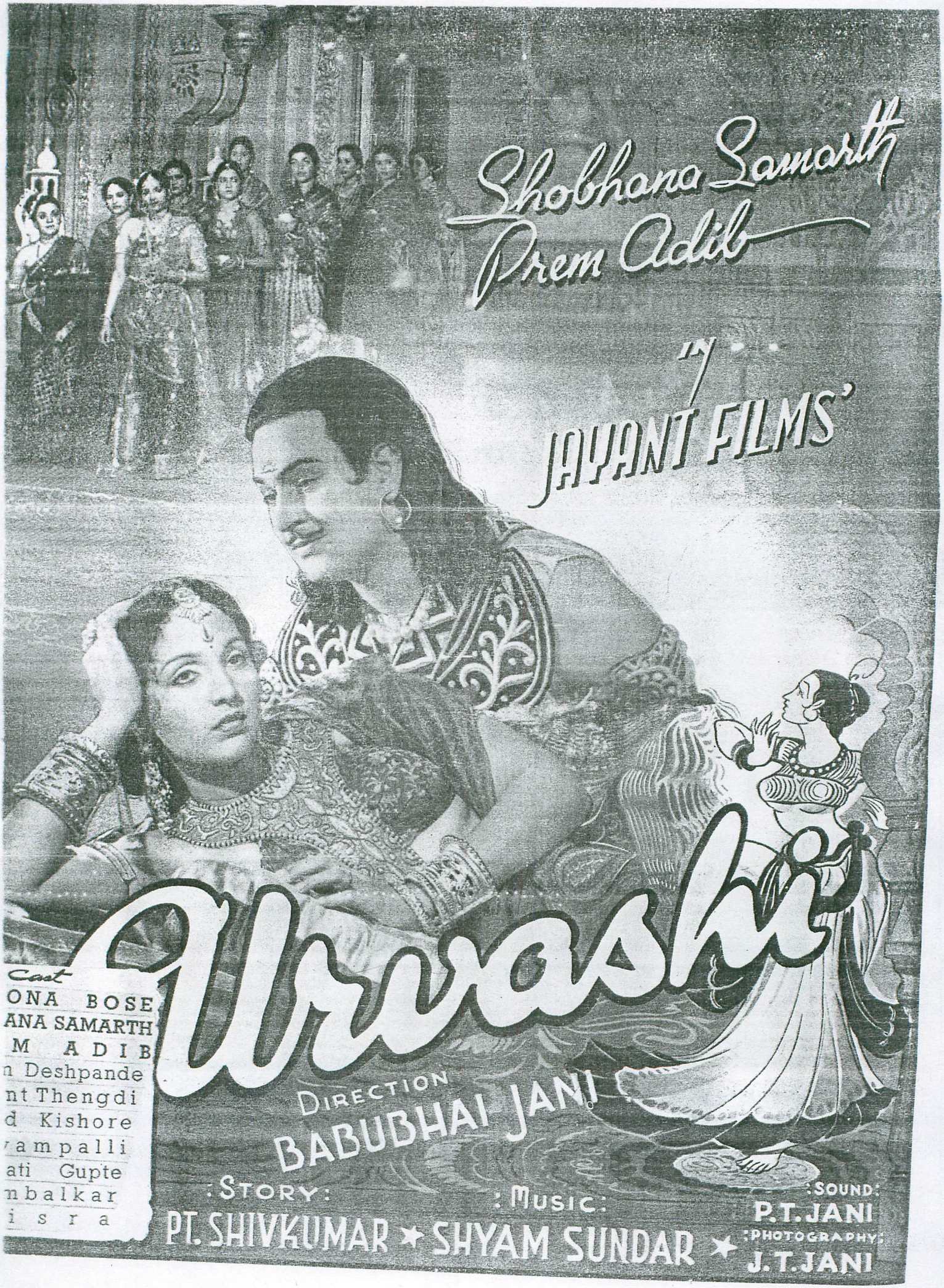
KAMLA CHATTERJI—

This popular starlet of Ranjit will be soon seen in "Caravan", a costume story of Ranjit Movietone.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PT. SHIVKUMAR
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SHYAM SUNDAR
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P.T. JANI
:PHOTOGRAPHY:
J.T. JANI

Editor's Mail

[In this section, the editor himself replies to queries from the letters. As thousands of letters are received every month—some anxious and several frivolous—it is neither possible nor convenient to attend to all. Selected letters are usually treated in an informative and humorous strain and no offence is meant to anyone.]

K. C. PATEL (Calcutta)

Don't you think "Vish-Kanya" is too lewd to be shown in general to the public?

There is nothing lewd about "Vish-Kanya", nor even suggestive, seeing that it was crowded with exceptionally ugly-looking girls with more ugly-looking legs. To me, the picture became a revolting experience because both men and women repulsed and bored.

HARDAYAL (Lahore)

What about the script of "Omar Khayyam", which you wrote for Shantaram?

It is now Prabhat property and like other odds and ends, it is kept on the shelf without dusting. The man who wanted to produce it is no longer with Prabhat and Baburao Pai becomes Omar himself whenever he touches it.

Are you still an honorary adviser in Shantaram's Film Academy?

I do not sail with Shantaram any longer. He wants a crew, not a captain.

D. S. PANDEY (Cawnpore)

Is it true that Motilal has left film work and started some business?

No such luck yet. If he gets into business of selling watches like his brother, he'll scare the customers away with his stiff shirt.

A. P. DAYARAMANI (Karachi)

What do you think of Kedar Sharma as a director? Which is his best picture?

His best picture will be the one in which he will strip everything including the emulsion from the celluloid film. I don't think much of Kedar Sharma as a director, though I had liked him once as a dialogue-writer.

K. JAGANNATH (Bombay)

Why don't the film stars contract permanent marriages?

Perhaps because they happen to be in an industry of entertainment and a new marriage gives different entertainment every time.

K. RAJENDRA SINGH (Agra)

What is your hobby? Mine is to collect "filmindia".

Mine is adding to your collection.

V. R. S. CHITTAL (Bombay)

Seeing the combined efforts and talents of Kishore Sahu and Winayak as director and actor as well, I have come to the conclusion that they should both give up acting in the films which they direct. Can you not stop these two in particular from making their blessed appearances on the screen which they persist in directing? Is it not a clear case of murder of the ambitious costume picture of Ramnik Productions' "Veer Kunal", where Kishore Sahu threatens to selfishly play the title role of Kunal himself besides directing and producing it? I can bet 10 chips to 1 that this picture will prove a shameful successor to "Shahenshah Akbar" or "Mahakavi Kalidas". Can't you do anything, friend?

Nothing, except mourning the event with you.

HARISH MEHROHTRA (Delhi)

How did Chandramohan and Saigal rise from clerical jobs to film stardom?

One went up "looking", the other went up "singing".

CHINUBHAI G. SHAH (Vile Parle)

Has colour anything to do with the beauty of a person? Will the same face look better in white skin than in the black?

For motion pictures, excepting those in technicolour, skin colour has no importance. All we

Parween, a new comer, will be seen in "Pehli Nazar", a Muslim costume of Mazhar Art Productions.

need are good features and a smooth silky skin. In life, colour is essential to heighten beauty. Good features show better on a fair skin. White and its shades make a popular colour because the world is ruled by people of this colour. For years we have been taught to look up to a white face and it is but natural to expect our beauties draped in white skins. When the negroes rule the world, black beauties will come into fashion.

G. M. GUNAKI (Rabkavi)

When everyone in India condemns crime pictures how is it that the Board of Film Censors passes pictures like "Kismet"?

Our official departments in India have not yet developed a social conscience. Probably this is considered a wrong acquisition for slaves.

V. R. VIJAYNARAYAN (Bangalore)

Is it bad to look at girls?

Yes. At bad girls.

R. N. MURTI (Bangalore)

In your editorial of January, 1945, you have asked foreign financiers to build studios and theatres in India for a period of 10 years. In that period of 10 years, those foreign producers will have fully established and settled themselves. They will get all help from the Government also. After that time they will never agree to leave the milch cow. And during those 10 years most of the Indian producers will be murdered in cold blood due to financial and other troubles. Then the Indian film industry will be in the hands of foreigners as India is today. Why are not these differences considered in the Motion Picture Producers' Association? I think it is better to settle the matters amongst ourselves than leaving our own industry in foreign hands.

I also think the same way but our thinking won't help as the industry is in the hands of non-thinkers.

B. M. PANJWANI (Bombay)

Whom do you consider the best singer among the following: Ashok Kumar, Surendra and Motilal?

Motilal, because every time he sings, he reminds us of the glorious music of India which died with Tansen. After all, one who revives old memories, one way or other, must be some singer.

MISS SITA ADVANI (Hyderabad)

Don't women with cat-eyes look distinctive on the screen?

They just look cats. If that is a distinction, they are welcome to it.

Wouldn't it be a blessing if Kamla Chatterji gives up screen acting till she becomes less fat and repulsive?

When women start growing the wrong way, they become more and more fat every day. Which means that we must give Kamla a decent burial as an artiste.

Why does Sadhona Bose always give classical dances in her pictures?

Because she has nothing else to give in a motion picture.

R. K. BHAT (Dadar)

What do you think of Hemchander's direction in "Meri Bahen"?

It was a misdirection of the intelligence he showed in "Wapas".

In blank expression, Aroon and Karan Dewan seem to run a close race. Tell me, who beats whom?

Both have screen faces which only their mothers can love and you know that to the mother, the ugliest duckling is a beauty. Both the boys have eyes which do not radiate even a suspicion of intelligence on the screen. In a match like this, why bother about who beats whom?

Why are producers still producing fantastic pictures like "Urvashi", "Nal Damayanti", etc.?

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

MISS SUDHA KARNATKI (Hubli)

How long will Director Nandlal take to complete his ambitious production "Amrapali"?

He began it only six months back. You must give him a year more before he realises that he is producing "Amrapalli".

Who is the most polished villain of the screen?

The villain's role requires more intelligence than that of the hero. While the latter gets natural sympathy, the former has to work against the current. An artiste in such a role has to be versatile. Some of those who come to mind at

Shobhana Samarth evidently has a sad moment in "Urvashi", a Jayant Films' production.

the moment are Kanhaiyalal, Yakub, David and Shah Nawaz. The older ones led by Chandramohan have become 'softies' in comparison with those mentioned above.

In how many pictures is Shanta Apte working at present?

She needs only one to make her presence felt.

I like Veena. Do you feel the same way?

How can I, being a man?..Protima Das Gupta also likes Begum Para. But I don't. Likes and dislikes are matters of personal taste.

K. RAMACHANDRAN (Matunga)

Whenever I see Zahur Raja on the race-course I am struck by his extremely clumsy gait and crude looks. How can such a man act the hero?

If Motilal with the 'stars and stripes' on his face and a bald patch smiling at the sun, can still play the hero and dance about on the race course like a little calf on a grazing ground, what crime has Zahur committed to be ruled out as a hero? Whenever I see Zahur, I remember Abyssinia.

Wasn't Baburao Pai thinking of directing "Hum Ek Hain", the next Prabhat picture?

He seems to have given up the idea now that Begum Para is not working with Prabhat any more.

Why do Begum Para and Protima Das Gupta always move together?

Protima and Para are pals. And Para is, in addition, Protima's ward and probably the old girl likes to keep an eye on the young one. Protima being a conscientious type keeps both the eyes on Para.

K. S. KADAM (Palghar)

What is your opinion about Ramchandra Pal's musical direction?

I know Pal to be a good musician, but the small experience I had of his direction is not a happy memory. If Pal would look after himself more than after others, I am sure he would score greater success.

Why does Kaushalya herself sing with the baby voice that she has got?

Probably she is shouting and telling the world that she is still a baby, though it is difficult to believe when you look more closely at her.

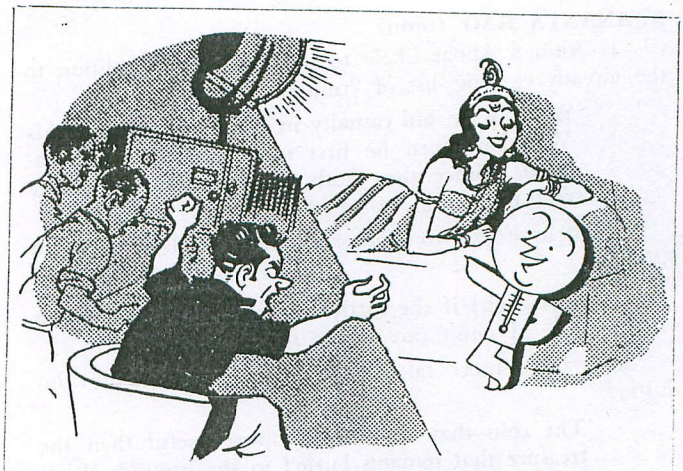
Is there a chance of Jamshed Wadia, becoming an actor like Shantaram?

If 'gentle' Jamsu can become a Member of the British Empire why can't he become something else also?

Why don't you become a 'beauty expert' and give hints to girls on "how to look beautiful"?

Girls are born beautiful and 'experts' can only add to the original stock. I can't risk being an 'expert' in this trade as pupils will want personal instruction.

Why has Producer W. Z. Ahmed suddenly switched off from "Shree Krishna Bhagwan" to "Prithviraj Sanjogita"?



IN THE STARLIGHT

(MR. WEATHERMAKER—FILM DIRECTOR, STAR)

F. D.: Ready—Shoot—Cut—Who are you, one of the extras ?

Mr. W: Personally, I think I ought to be part of the regular outfit.

Star: Isn't he cute ?

Mr. W: Cute is not the word, madam, I am essential, I am Weathermaker, the herald of air conditioning as perfected by Carriers, the pioneers. I aspire to stardom in India's film industry.

F. D: Another optimist doomed to fail.

Mr. W: I shall not fail. I shall be the biggest box office draw this industry has ever known. Think of it. Air conditioning from film storage to cinema theatre, air conditioned and dust proof dark chambers, processing laboratories and editing rooms for better negatives and better copies; studios cool, noise proof—without dust...

Star: Will that ever come true...

Mr. W: It will, beautiful, soon after the war. But if you folks are in a hurry, go and talk to Volkart Brothers, my promoters in India. Volkart Brothers have got plenty of plans how to assist the India film industry in its rapid progress.

F. D: Think of it—no more stars having fits of temper.

Star: Think of it—no more directors getting hot about nothing.

Mr. W: And to think of all the fan mail I'll get.

VOLKART VB BROTHERS

AIR CONDITIONING & REFRIGERATION DEPARTMENT

Pioneer Weathermakers in India

Representing

Carrier AIR CONDITIONING

BOMBAY, MADRAS, CALCUTTA, LAHORE, KARACHI, COCHIN.

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There is no 'why' about Ahmed. It is just, "what next".

S. ANANTA RAO (Sion)

Is Ahmed Abbas likely to become a new addition to the already existing list of "romantic heroes"?

Abbas is an old casualty in romance. He met his Waterloo when he first met Snehaprabha Pradhan. Since then both married different people and they seem to be satisfied.

Who impresses you more: A college girl or an office girl?

Just a girl if she carries the correct impress about her. I don't care where she comes from.

Isn't there more talent outside than in the film industry?

The coin that circulates is more useful than the treasure that remains buried in the ground. What use is that talent which remains within the sepulchral walls of an orthodox home?

Ratnamala looks indeed very funny in the 'Ratnavali' advertisement on Page 25 of your February issue. Don't you think so?

The pleasure of looking very funny is hers. And I don't mind any face on my advertisement pages.

K. A. PARIKH (Ahmedabad)

Can you mention any sweet-tongued actor and actress in the film industry?

I don't wish to mention names because we have sweet-tongued actors with the bedside manner and actresses with roadside manners.

What makes "Dassi" a successful picture?

The luck of the boys who bought it.

What has happened to Saigal's voice in "My Sister"?

No one croons melodiously for a sister. The world needs a sweetheart to sing a song of love.

What aspect of M.-G.-M.'s "Dragon Seed" particularly impressed you?

The people's struggle for freedom which is considered a crime in this country.

Are you fond of Vanmala?

Immensely. But keep it a secret.

Why does Suvarnalata work in so many pictures? What is attractive about her?

Nothing. And that is just it. For thirty years our producers have been attracted about nothing. In Hollywood girls have 'It'. In India, girls have "Nothing".

MISS M. SUKHTANKAR (Bombay)

Is it true that Film actress Veena slapped a journalist for writing against her?

Isn't truth stranger than fiction?

Why don't we hear about that versatile artiste Snehaprabha Pradhan nowadays?

Probably because she is too versatile.

Should girls be bold and outspoken or shy and quiet?

What girls "should be" is a thing of the past. The problem is what they are today and what they are going to be tomorrow. 'Bold' and 'outspoken' are poor words to describe some of the girls I have met.

In what atmosphere does Art thrive well?

In an atmosphere of indifference. Art is a creation which needs conflict.

Who is the better director between Jayant Desai and V. M. Vyas?

They are both better than Raghupat Roy, who directed "Shahenshah Akbar". Jayant can carry a lion to an office while Vyas can build an office round a lion. Both are great, Miss.

S. M. JOSHI (Bombay)

Is Meenaxi a good singer?

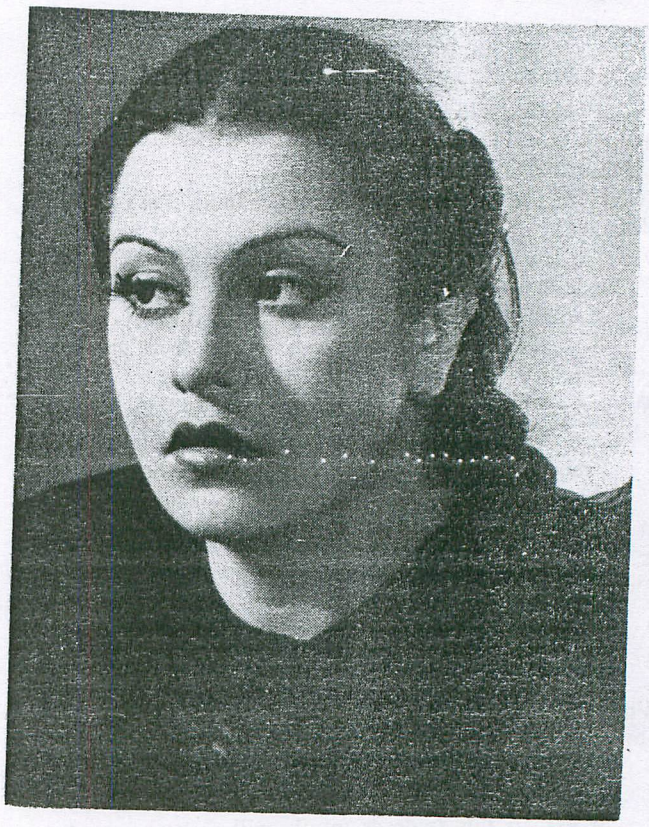
Like 'gentle' Jamsu, music is her forte. The only difference is that people don't seem to like it.

Would you like to possess a studio of your own?

As I am situated at present, I shall never own one. Then why indulge in likes and dislikes?

Why does Charlie repeat the same comic stunts in picture after picture?

There is something wrong with your sense of humour if you think that what Charlie does is comedy. His mother gave him a single face and



Veena is reported to have given an emotional portrayal in "Phool", a story of Famous Film.

he keeps on making it every time because our film fans are short-sighted.

MISS LATA DONGRE (Nasik)

Who is prettier between Shamim and Veena?

Shamim every time.

How is Chandraprabha as an artiste?

From what I have seen of her in motion pictures so far, she has pretty poor material for screen work. There is little to choose between her and some of the intelligent 'extras' we see on the screen. Only girls with something distinctive about them should take up the screen as a career. I am afraid Chandraprabha is in the wrong profession.

Don't you think that a social picture is always more interesting than a mythological one?

From an entertainment point of view, it should be so because in a mythological subject there is no suspense left for the film-goer as the story is often familiar. And suspense is the spice of the drama.

Film stars must be extremely prosperous in these days seeing that some of them own horses?

Producers are lucky in getting a better run from these horses than from their owners.

Can a good 'extra' ever become a 'star'?

This is a hopeless ambition for the males of the screen. If the female is good enough to be a 'star' ever, she never begins as an extra.

HOTU G. BIJLANI (Karachi)

Why do film actresses seek divorce soon after marriage?

Film actresses are larks who need space and air to fly wide and far. In this flight their art is born. Those who make the heaven their home cannot possibly be satisfied with the home as their only heaven.

Should girls of respectable families enter the film industry?

What do you mean by the word 'respectable'? Do you mean to say that those who are working in the film industry at present are not respectable in the sense you mean? Everyone of talent is welcome to step in and make a home in the industry.

A. R. THOMVRE (Akola)

Can Shantaram sing?

Oh yes, well enough to carry Jayashree on the wings of his music.

What actor fascinates you most on the screen?

Motilal. I am always spell-bound looking at the bald patch on his top.

AZIZ (Bombay)

Why has Protima Das Gupta divorced her husband Captain Huq?

So that they may remain friends longer.

May I know how many children Naseem has got?

How am I to know? I never went her way, nor am I a municipal census inspector.

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M. S. NAIK (Indore)

Why don't the stars working in Shantaram's pictures get any popularity as in case of Jayant Desai and others?

Shantaram needs all the fame that goes with a picture. If he leaves a little behind in a hurry, he will return to pick it up in a double hurry. What chance can the stars have under such circumstances?

MOHAN ANAND SINGH (Bombay)

Who is the better actress between Shanta Apte and Vanmala?

Vanmala acts better while Shanta looks better. Both, however, do more acting off the screen than on the screen.

C. H. SAMPAT (Bombay)

Have dance critics really any advantage or superiority over the film critics?

Dance critics have the foolhardy confidence born out of complete ignorance of their subject. I have still to meet a dance critic, who knows something about the art of dancing and who can write a critique without lifting paragraphs from the programme books.

MISS A. GAGRAT (Dadar)

Why is it that so many Indian pictures have more or less the same plot with hardly any variation or sense?

Because for the last thirty years we have been having the same writers, the same producers, the very same directors and the same artistes. All these fellows may fall differently several times, but every time they create the same pattern.

R. RAMACHANDRA REDDY (Madras)

Why the hell do you call your mag 'filmindia' when it doesn't print news about South Indian pictures?

Why the hell do you South Indians produce motion pictures and keep them as a blooming family secret? Can't you bloody-well shout about them?

MISS HANSA SAMPAT (Bombay)

I earnestly suggest that you should publish a weekly in addition to 'filmindia' as we do not have even one worth its name in Bombay, though we have so many?

It will be difficult to fill up a weekly with the stuff 'filmindia' contains seeing the poor material we have in the film industry. Half-a-dozen good-looking girls, not a single good-looking boy, a couple of brainy directors and producers without any ideals, can hardly contribute any news to a film weekly. Do you want me to be ranked with those "many" whom you dislike so much?

Do you for a moment believe that Shantaram's "Dr. Kotnis" in English will be any improvement on 'gentle' Jamsu's "Court Dancer" which has left a bad taste in our mouth?

Shantaram's "Dr. Kotnis" will perhaps be a bitter medicine and though the flavour will be different, it will leave behind the same taste as "The Court Dancer".

SURESH KUMAR GUPTA (New Delhi)

During your short visit to Delhi, did you find any one to be an actor or an actress?

Several of the boys who called to see me were half-sized men, who looked more like monkeys than human beings. A couple of good ones, I found too devoted to be useful as artistes. From the girls who saw me, some came out of curiosity, while the others with tipsy noses wanted to join immediately even without the permission of their parents. As I was not a slave trader, I did not think this proposal was worthwhile. What struck me was the cheek and the snobbish approach which some of the curious ones betrayed in their talk about the films and the film artistes in general. I discovered that most of these had a lurking itch for glamour but not the right type of enthusiasm that would take them anywhere towards success. Some of them wanted to be cradled to stardom. The pity was that I had no time for all this. Film-acting is a serious profession and above all needs serious approach.

N. R. LOKREY (Adoni)

What is your opinion about Begum Para?

A charming girl from 200 yards.

NIRMAL KUMAR (Lahore)

Why do Lux Toilet Soap advertisements appear with photographs of actresses and not of actors?

The manufacturers probably think that our actresses have something to wash, or perhaps our actors use bricks to clean their hides. I don't

No longer a baby now, Akhtari comes singing and smiling in "Kaise Kahun", a Pancholi picture.

know which exactly is the reason as I have never used the Lux soap myself.

RAMESH S. BOOCH (Bombay)

As you claim to be the future historian of the Desai family, may I know why Surendra Desai is called 'Bulbul'? Is any mysterious significance attached to this pleasing-to-the-ear per name?

Anything can happen in the Desai family. With his usual absent-mindedness Pa Chimanbhai must have heard the song of the bulbul in the first cry of Surendra. From that misunderstanding to the present misnomer is not a great athletic feat for the Desais.

MRS. RATNA V. IAH (Mysore)

I wonder whether our film artistes sit through their performances with a critical eye and try to improve in their next. I am sure many of them should blush seeing their own funny faces on the screen without even a pretence at emotional acting?

When some professional critics watch pictures through glass eyes, it shouldn't be surprising if the artistes went through their own pictures with closed eyes. No one improves in this country. Everyone goes worse.

D. KANYALAL (Poona)

Whenever I see a photograph of Mr. Surendra, I find his face always gloomy and sad?

He is likely to be worse now that he has got married. As a merry widower, he ought to have been smiling but if he couldn't do that in that state, he has little chance under the new circumstances.

MIRZA ALI SAFDAR (Lucknow)

What is the present address of Comrade D. G. Tendulkar?

Care of Uncle Joe Stalin, Moscow, U.S.S.R.

K. V. SHESHAPPA (Bangalore)

Mr. Baburao Patel, please give your age, caste and life-history.

Age: 5.000 years,
Caste: Male,
Life history: Filmindia.

HUKUMCHAND GUPTA (Delhi)

Can you tell me the difference between 'love and desire'?

'Desire' is the spark, 'Love' is its flame.

A. M. KHAN (Allahabad)

Whom do you like more, the one that praises you or the one that abuses you?

The one who leaves me alone and lets me live my own way.

I. G. CHANDRASEKHAR (Adoni)

I want to visit Bombay and meet you.

Can't you do something else—less foolish?

W. M. TATKE (Damoh)

What qualifications are required to become a film journalist?

Carrying cock-eyes with loud goggles to cover. Bright coloured coat to attract attention. Company of cheap screen girls to get public recognition. Empty pockets to accommodate the dole from the producers. Ability to do card-sharping to facilitate future pick-pocketing. Pandering to the requirements of soap manufacturers and supplying them film girls. Carrying a fountain pen which can write only with the producers' ink. Drinking free whisky wherever found, brothels preferred. Seeking sex in the gutters of the city. There are many other qualifications which distinguish some of our film journalists. The best way to know them is to discover them through their work.

10 CASH PRIZES FOR 10 QUESTIONS.

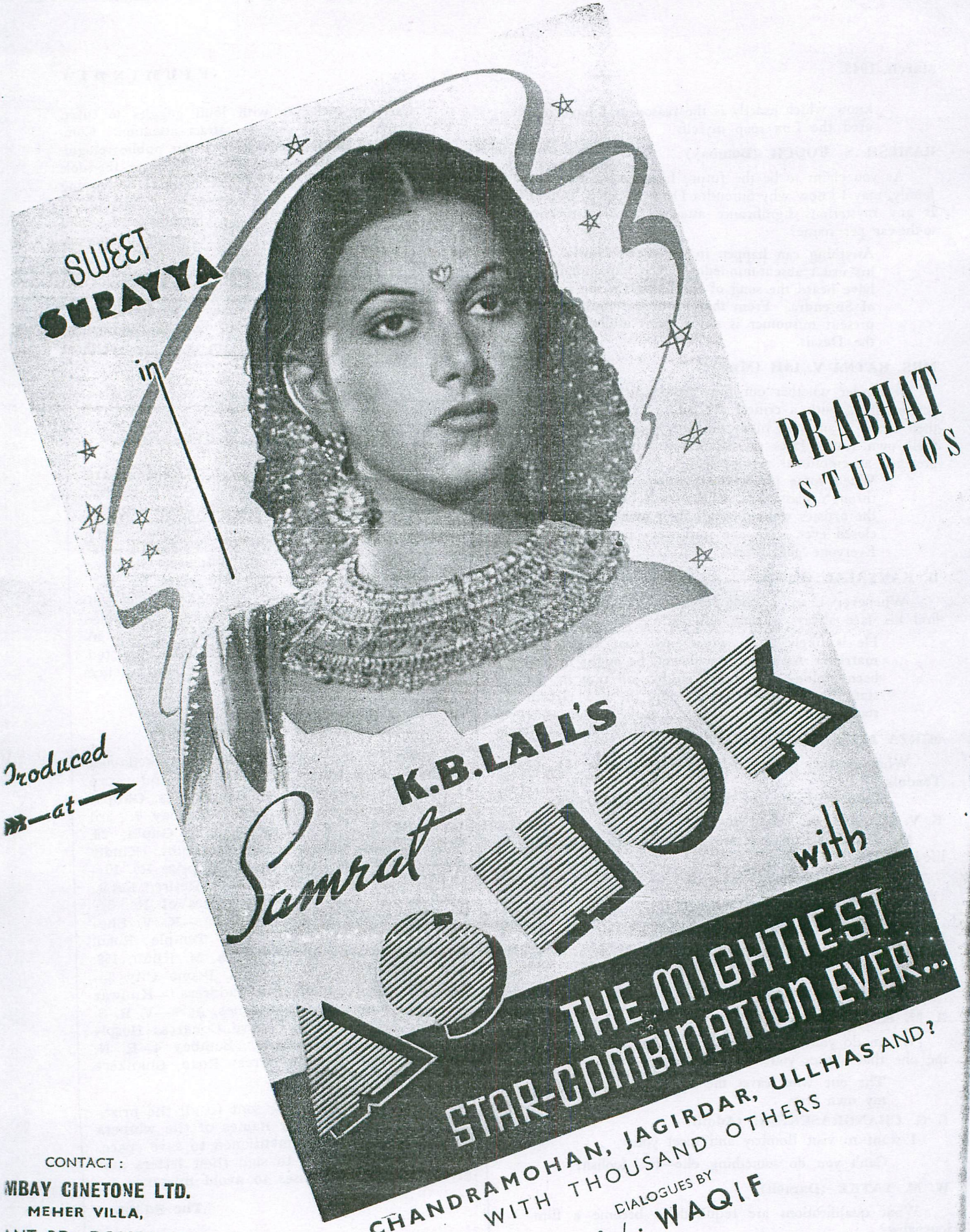
The proprietors of "Filmindia" will award every month 10 Cash prizes to the readers whose questions are considered interesting or elicit interesting replies in the "Editor's Mail". The Editor's decision will be absolutely final in awarding the prizes as follows:—1st prize Rs. 25/- 2nd prize Rs. 20/- 3rd prize Rs. 15/- 4th prize Rs. 10/- and 6 consolation prizes of of Rs. 5/- each. The names of the prize-winners will be announced every month in "Filmindia" and the amounts will be remitted to them by Money Order. No correspondence will be entertained.

PRIZE-WINNERS FOR MARCH.

1st prize Rs. 25/- to K. A. Parikh, Ahmedabad. (Kindly send your full address.) 2nd prize Rs. 20/- to Miss Hansa H. Sampat, 13, Ganpat Bhuvan, 3rd Floor, Chowpatty, Bombay 7. 3rd prize Rs. 15/- to Suresh Kumar Gupta, 26, Central Lane, Babar Road, New Delhi. (Kindly sign your letters in future.) 4th prize Rs. 10/- to W. M. Tatke, c/o K. V. Tatke, Retired E.A.S., Damoh, C.P. 6 consolation prizes of Rs. 5/- each are given to the following:—K. V. Sheshappa, Door No. 103, Bull Temple Road, Basuvangadi P.O., Bangalore—A. M. Khan, 158, Chuk. Allahabad—D. Kanyalal. Poona City 2—(Kindly send your full address.)—Kunwar Rajendra Singh, 366, Civil Lines, Agra—V. R. S. Chittal, Arab Mansion, Above Congress Hospital, Khetwadi, 13th Lane, Bombay 4—R. N. Murti, 20, Nalini Third Cross Road, Shankerpur, Bangalore City.

Money Orders are being sent to all the prize-winners. In future only names of the winners and the towns will be mentioned to save space. Readers are requested to sign their letters and give their full addresses to avoid mistakes.

The Editor.



CONTACT :
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NUR JEHAN—

This popular screen artiste is working in many pictures at present. Here she is in "Zeenat", produced by Eastern Pictures.

A MARVELLOUS STORY—A WONDERFUL PICTURE. AHMED HAS PROVED HIS GENIUS AT LAST AND BECOMES THE HERO OF THE DAY.

NEENA PLAYS AN IMMORTAL ROLE.

—*CINE-HERALD.*

MUN-KI-JEET IS THE CLEANEST, GREATEST AND THE BEST MOTION PICTURE OF TO-DAY.

—*EVENING NEWS, Lahore.*

THE SONGS AND LYRICS OF MUN-KI-JEET ARE AN OCEAN OF MELODY, EVERY NOTE OF WHICH KINDLES A THOUSAND EMOTIONS.

—*TEJ, Lahore.*

IT IS A SUPERB COMBINATION OF THE BEST IN ENTERTAINMENT.

—*MOUJI.*

MUN-KI-JEET IS THE BEST PICTURE OF THE CURRENT YEAR.

—*SARPANCH, Lucknow.*

A SOUL-STIRRING MASTERPIECE AFTER A LONG TIME.

—*PARAS.*

PRODUCER W. Z. AHMED HAS PAVED A NEW HIGH-WAY FOR OTHER PRODUCERS. A UNIQUE STORY, LITERARY DIALOGUE, INSPIRING SONGS AND NEENA'S PERFORMANCE HAVE MADE THIS FILM A GREAT MASTERPIECE. MUN-KI-JEET IS A PICTURE THAT WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

—*CHITRA.*

ALL CRITICS AGREE THAT SUCH A BEAUTIFUL AND FAULTLESS PICTURE HAS COME TO THE SCREEN AFTER A VERY LONG TIME.

—*FILM-INDIA, Lahore.*

SHALIMAR PICTURES SHOULD CERTAINLY BE PROUD OF THIS PICTURE.

—KHAYYAM.

OF ALL NEENA'S FILMS, THIS IS HER MASTER-PIECE.

—CHITRAPAT, Delhi.

THE PICTURE IS SURE TO HAVE A LONG RUN THROUGHOUT THE CIRCUIT.

—RUP-BANI.

THIS PICTURE IS A MASTERPIECE FROM SHALIMAR.

—RANGBHOOMI.

IT IS A BEAUTIFUL PRESENTATION.

—DIN-DUNIYA.

DIRECTOR AHMED HAS BLENDED ART WITH ENTERTAINMENT IN THEIR SUBLIMEST FORMS.

—MUSSAVIR, Lahore.

A COURAGEOUS STORY- NEENA AND SHYAM ARE SUPERB.

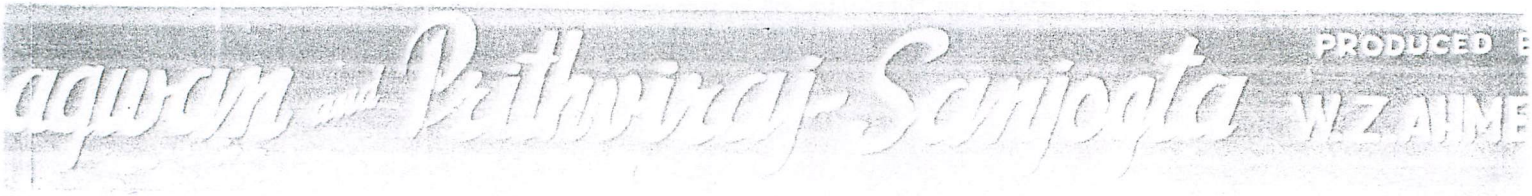
—AIRGRAPH.

A STORY BROAD-BASED ON A PATRIOTIC-CUM-PASTORAL THEME. SONGS QUITE IN TUNE WITH THE SETTINGS ECHOING FEELINGS OF PASSION OR SORROW—HISTRIONIC FEATS OF NO MEAN ORDER.

—SCREENWORLD.

...AND ON THE AIR

MUN-KI-JEET IS AN IMPORTANT PICTURE IN MANY WAYS. IT'S SONGS ARE SENSIBLE AND DELIGHTFUL... THE LANGUAGE IS EXEMPLARY... NEENA AS 'ARSI' IS MAGNIFICENT. SHE HAS IMMORTALISED THE ROLE... MUN-KI-JEET IS A FINE PICTURE, WHICH IS AN ACHIEVEMENT FOR THE PRODUCERS, WHO DESERVE ALL APPRECIATION.



MEENAKSHI—

After a long time this artiste from Maharashtra will be seen on the screen in "Panna Dai", a costume story of Pradeep Pictures.

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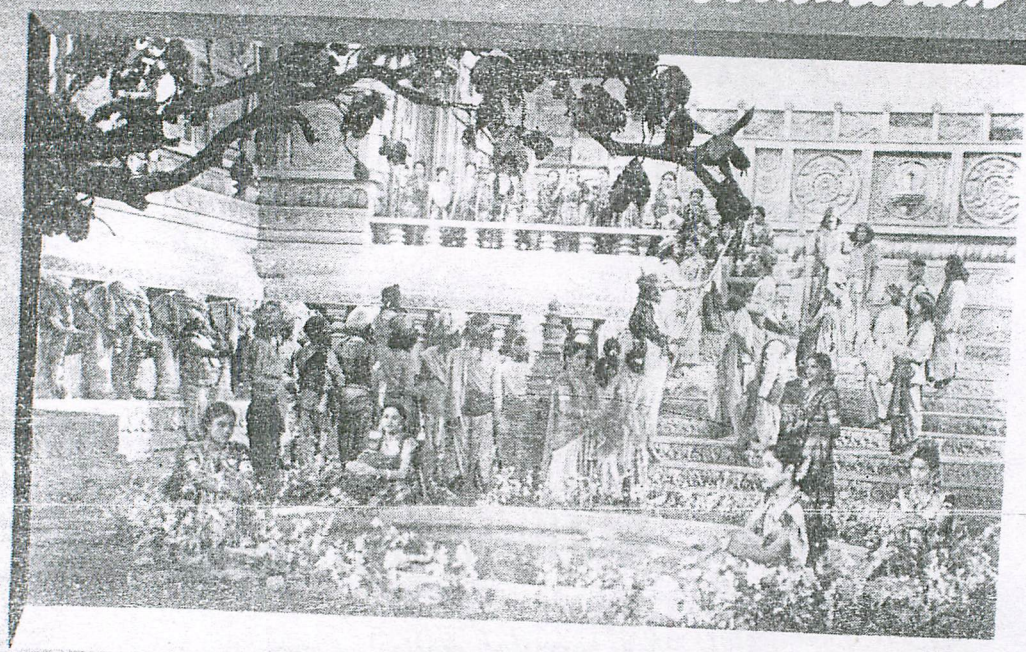
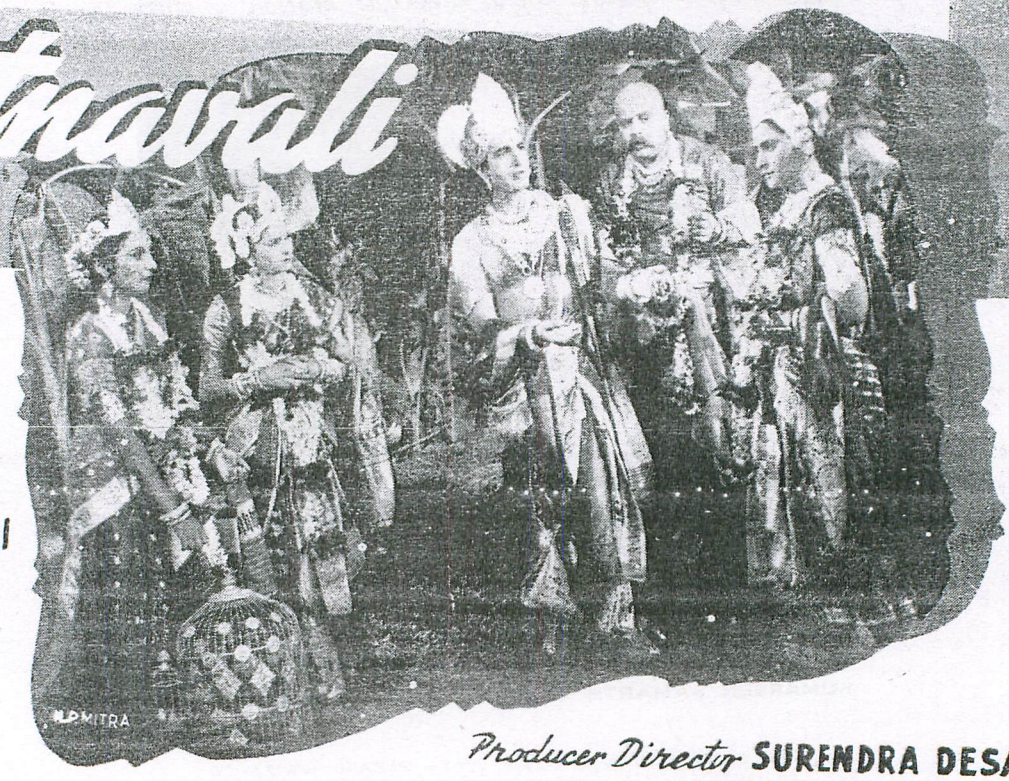


Ratnavali



Cast

SURENDRA
RATNAMALA
(COURTESY PRAKASH)
USHA MANTRI
MAYA BANNERJI
K.N. SINGH
NAND KISHORE

Producer Director **SURENDRA DESAI**

Music **GOBINDRAM**

PARTICULARS: **AMAR PICTURES**, 85, MAIN ROAD, DADAR, BOMBAY—14.

Woes & Echoes

(This will be the readers' forum in future—as and when space permits. From the producer to the lay film goer, every one can write to the Editor and ventilate his grievance. For every letter published in these columns, the publishers will pay Rs. 5/-. Letters should be signed and marked "Woes And Echoes". Photographs of the readers will be published along with their letters, if convenient.—The Editor.)

Shantaram's "Shakuntala"

"Mr. Shantaram, India's greatest director, has failed in his film, "Shakuntala", Kalidas' immortal classic, in casting the roles (mainly the heroine) from the critical point of view. Secondly, the songs of Shantaram's "Shakuntala", are absolutely against the original conception of Kalidas from the view point of art, language and music."

RABKAVI. **G. M. Gunaki.**

The Old Order

"Shree Ranjit was going the way of improvement for some time. But now again the olden days seem to have come back considering their present cheap quality. Can't you advise Chandulal Shah, your great friend, to overhaul his directorical staff?"

JUBBULPORE. **Dev Dutta Seed.**

[No one likes free advice.—Ed.]

Indeed, Why ?

"The producers and directors seem to be bent upon producing cheap, shabby and over-romantic pictures. Perhaps they are more concerned with the box-office success than with the cultural and educative value of the films. Why can't they picturise romance, if they cannot do away with it entirely, as it exists in our everyday life?"

BANGALORE. **M. S. Srinivasan.**

Wishful Thinking

"Biscuit-faced" Shahu Modak, once a popular hero, is becoming worse and worse everyday. He does not know how to walk. If he quits the film industry and joins again when Protima Das Gupta starts playing mother roles to act opposite her, I shall congratulate him."

MADRAS. **Aseef J. Premnath.**

Dress Reform

"In mythological pictures our artistes look very attractive in oriental costumes. Is it not funny that we do not dress ourselves in a similar way everyday through life, though all of us are fond of oriental art? Will the film stars, whom we are prone to imitate, take the lead and bring about a change in our dress that is best suited to our climate and tradition?"

LUMDING. **Mrs. Renu Devi.**

Shortage

"Do you think there is a famine of good looking young men in India? Whenever I go to see a picture, I am compelled to imagine that there is a dearth of handsome youths or the Government is hoarding them in the different services. In my opinion, heroes like Harish, Chandramohan, Pahari, Ishwarlal, etc., should leave their film career and join the Indian Air Force at once.

Miss Sachi Rani Bose.

RAWALPINDI.

Shy and Shrewd

"I almost concur with you in regard to your remarks that our film industry is completely in the hands of a few financiers who are more anxious to fill their over-filled money-bellies rather than to attach any human value to the art in the film production and that they have to learn a thorough lesson from the best foreign film producers, viz., Hollywood and others. My point here is in reference to your invitation to American Theatre Magnates who have a "huge virgin field to build seven to eight thousand modern theatres in India. There is scope to employ millions of dollars in the distribution section of the industry and millions more can be invested in building up-to-date production studios."

"No doubt the spirit and motive behind your suggestion is good; but it occurs to any student of Indian industry that India, even with educated and intelligent men as business magnates, cannot stand foreign competition in any industry (with only a very few exceptions) as a matter of fact, much less in the film industry; and I don't think it is necessary for me here to quote instances.

"Our land is slowly passing more and more to foreign capitalists who have very shrewdly taken advantage of the shyness of Indian capital (the theoretical politics apart) and it may not be far off when practically Indian Capital will find absolutely no place at all in India under growing competition which is, and surely going to be very very severe unless we force the unwilling hands of the Central Authorities to come to the aid of our investors.

"India cannot afford to learn a trade at the cost of her business-life which is at stake even with the hue-and-cry of our nationalists who are clamouring for protection in many directions.

"India surely needs protection in the film industry. But within ourselves we have to open the eyes of our money-thirsty producers".

BANGALORE. **K. Nandavar.**

Criminals

In what way is M. G. M.'s "Kismet" less harmful than "Kismet" produced by the Bombay Talkies? M.G.M. unfolded before our eyes the ups and downs of a beggar-magician who lived solely by his wits. B. T. Ltd., also unfolded to us the same thing practically and that you called "glorification of crime" and what not. Why didn't you condemn M.G.M.'s "Kismet". Is it because it is produced, directed and acted by the 'Whites'?

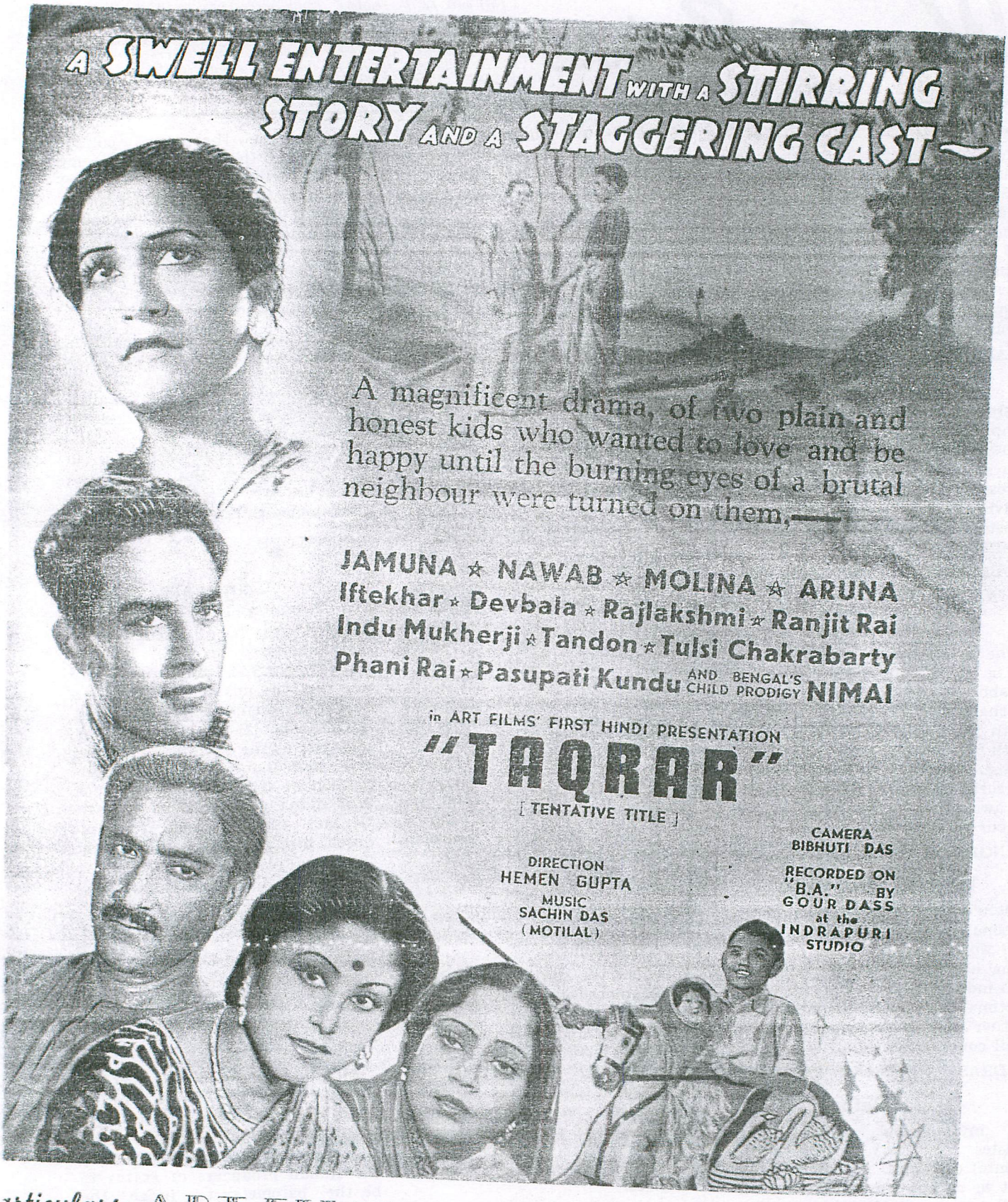
BOMBAY. **Bomy Jhabvala.**

[I dislike both the pictures but more so the Indian one because an Indian producer has stooped to poison his own people. The "Whites" have often been better criminals than our people.—Ed.]

Murder

After seeing the recent pictures released in Bombay, I feel it essential to ask you, being a critic with brain and guts, why and whether the box-office should be used by the Indian producers of status to be the barometer to judge the quality and standard of pictures. Is it not a clear case of murder of art and technique?

MAHIM. **D. M. Prabhu.**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A magnificent drama, of two plain and honest kids who wanted to love and be happy until the burning eyes of a brutal neighbour were turned on them,——
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Phani Rai ☆ Pasupati Kundu AND BENGAL'S CHILD PRODIGY NIMAI
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OUR REVIEW

"My Sister", A Common Story Clumsily Done

Hem Chunder Progresses In Wrong Direction

MY SISTER

Producers: New Theatres Ltd.
Language: Hindustani.
Story & Scenario: Benoy Chatterjee.
Music Direction: Pankaj Mullick.
Photography: Sudhin Majumdar.
Audiography: Shamsunder Ghosh.
Songs: Pt. Bhusan.
Dialogues: Amjad Hussain.
Cast: Saigal, Sumitra, Nawab, Akhtar Jehan and others.
Released At: Central Talkies, Bombay.
Date of Release: 5th Jan., 1945.

Directed By
HEM CHUNDER.

This is a propaganda story produced for the Government of India in the hope that, after showing it, people will rush to deposit their blood in the blood banks of the country. Actually by the time you come to the end all about the blood and the blood bank is completely forgotten and the purpose of the production stands entirely frustrated by the time we see the last foot of the picture.

Forgetting the propaganda angle about the blood bank, the story is about a brother's love for his little sister. As such, it is stretched a bit to meet the demands of the orthodox minds.

Ramesh, a village school master loves his little sister Bimla, too deeply and offers his own blood to save her when she meets with a serious accident. His blood is found unsuitable and after a little twist in the story a hospital physician offers his own blood and saves Bimla.

Now the story travels through the usual rut. Ramesh meets Krishna, the daughter of a local Zamindar and they naturally fall in love with each other. To find an excuse to meet, Ramesh becomes Krishna's tutor. For sometime the story goes on with the tiresome, familiar sequences and Ramesh is offered the daughter of the Zamindar on condition that he would leave his sister and live with the father-in-law.

As is expected, this being the story of a sister, Ramesh refuses to do so and goes to Calcutta to become rich and successful. There he joins an Opera Company and manages to get Rekha, a stage actress, interested in him. Rekha, of course, falls in love and for a time a one-sided parallel romance is started.

Now we come to the usual misunderstandings and situations in which self-respect, pride and other mental concoctions are put in. Air-raids, sirens and what-not are also heard. All the girls are brought on the screen and again taken away for a while, misunderstandings are created and new understandings are restored, all in the familiar mode. Throughout the picture there is not a single novelty nor a single twist which would take any praise or admiration.

At the end of it all, the hero gets the heroine and he finds his sister also in the heroine's house. This ends the usual orthodox humbug. From the beginning to the end the story part of "My Sister" remains flimsy and unconvincing.

The direction of Hem Chunder is far from satisfactory and certainly not upto the standard which he attained in "Wapas". Pankaj Mullick, the Music-director, has dished out some old tunes by changing the opening lines. And from this affair only one tune attracts a bit. The lyrical compositions of Pundit Bhusan are rather awkward and clumsy. Sound and photography are of a mediocre standard.

From the players Saigal, old and tired as usual, this time sings with a broken reed in the throat. Sumitra who is cast as the heroine is evidently a new-comer to the screen. She wears a startled expression and though she looks pretty attractive in life, she does not maintain this impression on the screen. Beyond running about she does nothing worthy of attention. Nawab overacts as the boss of the theatrical company. Akhtar Jehan and Chandravati do nothing much to write home about in the roles of Bimla and Rekha.

There is nothing special in the picture to attract. On the other hand, it is a bit boring at places. The picture is, however, expected to run well because of its orthodox theme and just because it is produced by New Theatres who still enjoy the goodwill of the people.

Even in "Kaise Kahun" this vulgar story of Indian film humour cannot be told. The photo supplies the evidence of the funny sense of humour our producers have. This time the producer is Dalsukh Pancholi.

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Fantastic Story Proves A Fantastic Disappointment

"Vish-Kanya" Fails To Entertain

In the synopsis of this picture we are told that the story of "Vish-Kanya" is not a fairy tale. The writer, Kedar Sharma, assures us that Vish-Kanyas were a reality once. It is in this conviction that the writer has lost sight of the theme of his story. By convincing himself that these virgins of venom had a physical existence once, Kedar Sharma completely lost count of the spiritual philosophy behind this story. It is this belief perhaps which is responsible for the Writer-director showing so much of the physical flesh of a number of women in the picture.

It is surprising that in an educated man like Kedar Sharma, who decorates his name with a big university degree, seeds of fantastic belief should be found in the mental region. It is an impossible proposition biologically to rear girls on poison. The reference to these girls as 'Vish-Kanyas' is merely allegoric. It is a well-known fact that all over the world through the different ages, and even in the present times, beautiful women have been used as political weapons to destroy the morale of the enemy. That famous spy Mata Hari is a good example of a modern Vish-Kanya. And if we have to believe the theory put forth by Kedar Sharma then we must be convinced that this woman was also reared on poison. This fundamental difference in the interpretation of the theme has cost the picture not only its philosophy but also its appeal as an entertaining motion picture. Had the writer understood the allegoric significance behind the term 'Vish-Kanya' he could have given the picture a more philosophic interpretation and thus made the story more acceptable to the people.

VISH-KANYA.

Producers: Ranjit Movietone.
Language: Hindustani.
Screenplay, Songs & Dialogues: Kidar Sharma.
Music: Khemchand Prakash.
Cinematography: G. G. Gogte.
Audiography: B. C. Vyas.
Cast: Sadhona Bose, Surendra, Prithviraj, Kamla Chatterji and others.
Released At: Opera House, Bombay.
Date of Release: 30th Dec., 1944.
Directed By
KIDAR SHARMA.

Ragini comes to the screen again in "Kaise Kahun", a Pancholi picture.

Just at present we find 'Vish-Kanya' a crudely produced picture with plenty of ugly girls with more ugly bodies and presented in an atmosphere uglier still. And the men in the picture vied with the women in utter ugliness.

Kedar Sharma probably thought that by putting in a number of ugly girls and by exposing their knee-caps he was providing so much sex appeal for the people to see and to thrill at. It is here that he has committed the greatest mistake because not one woman in the whole picture is presentable as a glamorous screen artiste. The heroine looks too old to be glamourised while some of the others either look too fat and bloated or look too Mongolian to suit Indian tastes. Not even a sex-starved person would like to see this parade of sex twice.

Like all fantastic stories which have a moral at the end, the story of "Vish-Kanya" is also silly. The King of Kamroop had invaded Gourasthan and driven out Bajarputra, the ruling prince. Unable to offer another battle to the conqueror, his minister resorts to the use of a Vish-Kanya to kill the conqueror of Gourasthan.

Nilima, a Naga Kanya is, therefore,

Here is an intriguing situation from "Ghulami", a propaganda picture of Shalimar, featuring Renuka Devi.

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Kusum Deshpande and David look electrified in "Panna", a propaganda picture of Navyug.

chosen for the job and she is imported to Gourasthan. Here she meets Madhuker, the Court poet, with whom she falls in love inspite of her strict instructions to the contrary. Madhuker also reciprocates this love unaware of the fact that the girl is a Naga Kanya. For a time we are shown a conflict going on in the mind of the girl between her duty to kill the King by kissing him and her love for Madhuker. After a number of unconvincing sequences love triumphs and conquers the villainous desire of murdering the King. Nilima is banished from the kingdom along with her lover and we are shown that her ability to kill a person with her poisonous kiss is taken away by her own father who sacrifices his life to make his daughter happy and dies after kissing her.

If we are to believe Kedar Sharma's conviction that 'Vish-Kanyas' did exist as a reality we would like to know whether their poisoning powers ended with a single kiss and a single death. If we are to believe that these virgins were brought up on poison we must also believe that their power to kill must be given a larger number of victims than one. It thus looks a far-fetched affair to believe that a woman is brought upon poison to deliver a single kiss and to kill a single man and that after this victim the woman became a normal person.

Actually this is what we are shown in the picture and the whole affair does become terrifically unconvincing.

POOR PRODUCTION VALUES

The motion picture script is a clumsy job from the beginning to the end and it has been shot in a more clumsy way all throughout. In fact not a single shot has been carefully taken nor has a single situation been carefully developed. The entire fault for the failure of the picture must be put at the door of Kedar Sharma, who has not only written the story, the dialogues and the songs but has also directed the picture. In all these aspects Sharma has failed miserably.

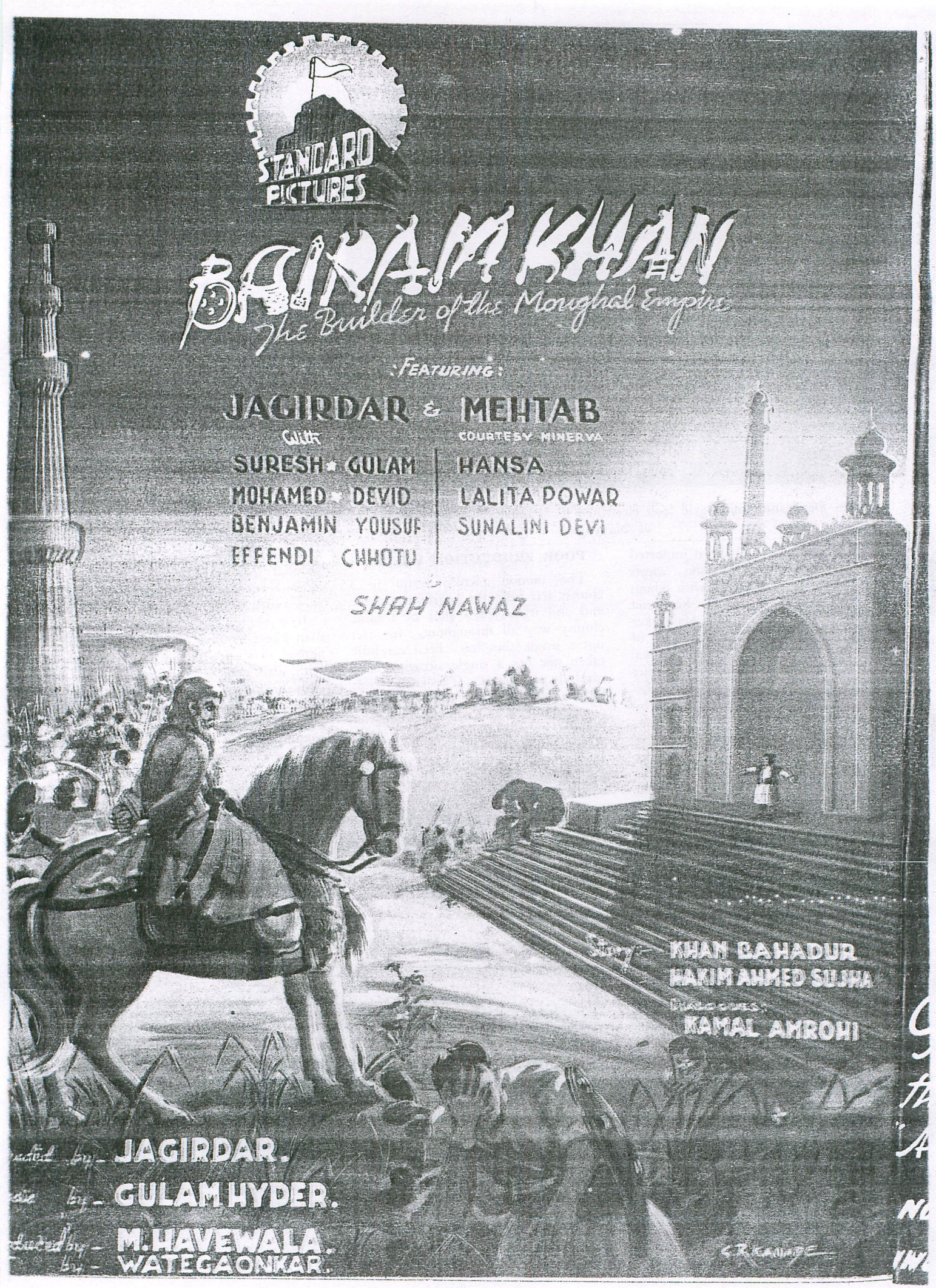
Sound and photography are as usual of mediocre standard. The music is too poor to deserve even a mention. A couple of lyrics are well composed but in words which make good poetry, but provide bad phonetics for music.

From the players no one gives a good performance. The personal appearance of the main artistes is utterly killed by costumes which look comic. The headgear which Surendra wears makes him look like a long-nosed clown from a circus. Prithviraj, when he delivers his dialogues, speaks more to himself than to the audience. Kamla Chatterjee carries a potato face with a long nose stuck on it. Brij Mala looks more Mongolian than Indian. Sadhona Bose strikes one as a citizen of Assam. Age seems to be fast creeping on the face of this woman and she looks anything but glamorous. What little she could act before she seems to have forgotten entirely in this picture and her dialogues seem to come from a thousand miles away with the tone peculiar to the Bengalees. In short, almost everyone in the picture looks silly and acts silly.

It is a pity that a clever business man like Chandulal Shah should have agreed to spend such a lot of money with such poor stuff in story, artiste and direction. 'Vish-Kanya" must have cost a pretty bit in money seeing some of the huge sets used for the picture.

In conclusion, "Vish-Kanya" is by itself a motion picture poison one would not like to swallow.

Durga Khote and Leela Misra in a pathetic situation in "Panna Dai", a historical story of Pradeep pictures.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LALITA POWAR
SUNALINI DEVI
SHAH NAWAZ
Story — KHAN BAHADUR HAKIM AHMED SUJHA
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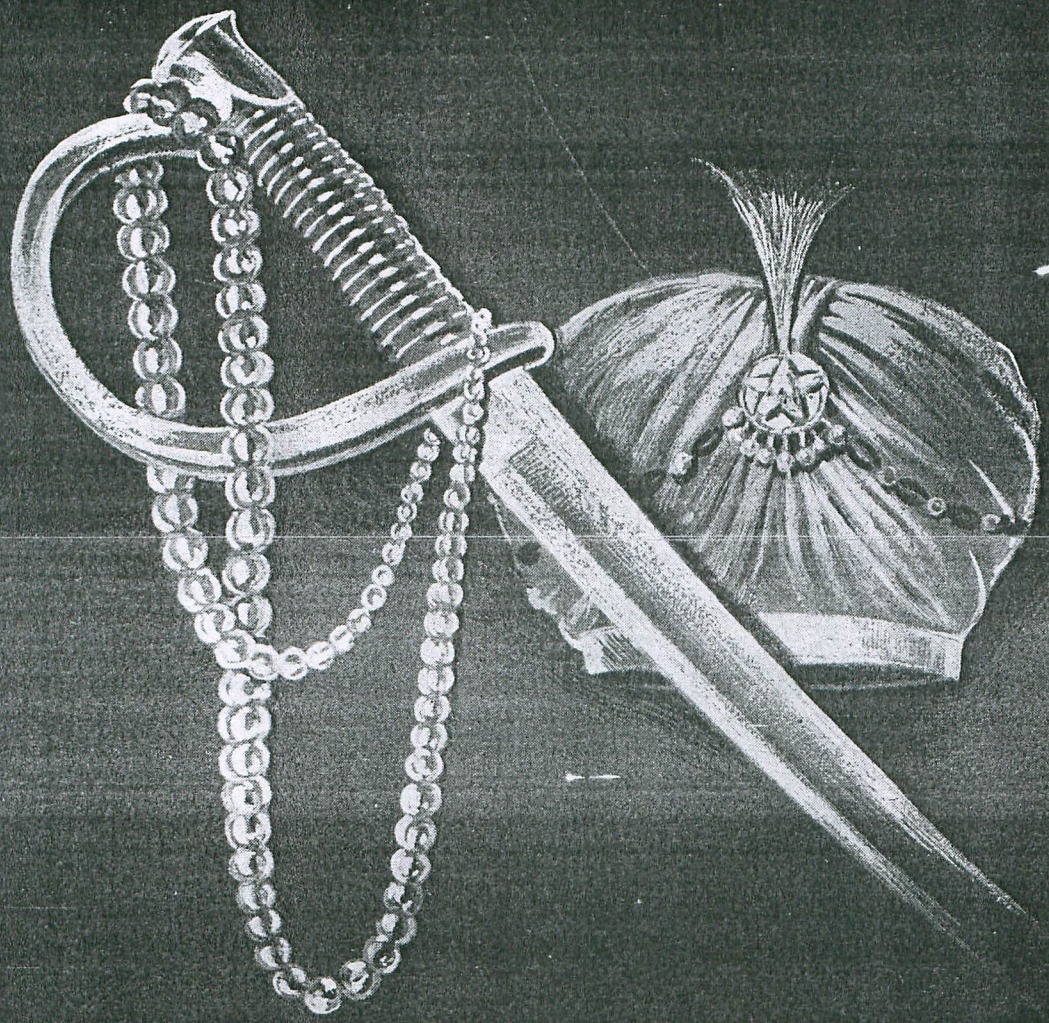

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Mubarak, M. Ismail, Master Vithal, Cope, Gulab, Azurie, Leela Pawar, Leela Mishra, Anita Sharma, Vasantrao Pehelwan, Ratan Piya, Vinaya Kale, Khan Mastana, Vasant Kanse, Waideshi, Shree Bhagwan, Nana Phatak, Baby Devi, Baby Nalini, Vaine etc.

★

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OUR NEXT ATTRACTIONS

RUKMINI - SWAYAMWAR (Mythological) ★ **RANI AHILYABAI HOLKAR** (Historical)

Both the stories written by SHIVRAM WASHIKAR

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OUR REVIEW

"Aina" Presents The Same Old Story!

Good Performances Attract Attention!

I cannot exactly remember how many times I have seen the story which "Aina" presents on the screen. Every year I come across a similar type of a story at least thirty times. Which means that during the last twenty years the story of "Aina" must have been shown on the screen at least 600 times. To these 600, Mohanlal Dave should have contributed his century of similar silly tales.

There may have been some truth and parallel incidents in life in this familiar plot twenty years ago, but I refuse to believe that the story of "Aina" as presented on the screen today, with its impossible exaggerations, is a reflection of actual life existing anywhere today in India. The story, therefore, remains a fiction in its essential incidents and its popularity must be attributed to the retrospective bent of the human mind which likes to look back upon ancient history and revel in its incidents.

If "Aina" is an index of the future work of Prabhulal Dwivedi, we must straightaway declare him to be a social menace. Perusing his work, as presented on the screen, he seems to be the long-lost twin brother of Mohanlal Dave. If pictures like "Aina" are going to click at the box-offices, the future of the Indian film industry is indeed very dark and heart-rending.

AINA

Producers:	D. R. D. Productions
Language:	Hindustani
Story:	Prabhulal Dwivedi
Dialogues:	Pandit Fani & K. Rashid
Songs:	Fani and T. Naqvi
Music:	G. Sufi and F. Ali Khan
Photography:	A. Ajmeri
Sound:	B. V. Save
Cast:	Yakub, Rajkumari Shukla, Kaushalya, Husna Banu, Trilok, Yashodhara Katju, etc.
Released At:	Imperial, Bombay.
Date of Release:	9th Feb. 1945.

Director:
S. M. YUSUF

Granting that 99% of our film-goers are damn fools, it is still surprising to observe that a downright transparent stuff like "Aina" should appeal to the crowds. If such crowds are to be catered for in the future the business of producing motion pictures is going to be a game for nincompoops and heartless intellectuals.

That is the usual party scene from Indian pictures where everyone makes a different face and all together don't tell any story. This one is from "Ghulami". a Shalimar picture.

Mazhar Khan plays a great role in "Bachpan", a story of Basant Pictures.

STINKING OLD PLOT

"Aina" is an impossible story. It is something that cannot happen today in any part of the world unless we go back to the dark ages when the slave traffic in human flesh existed.

The main theme of the story revolves round a shrewish woman, who, by virtue of her elderly position, ill-treats the junior members of the family and creates an inferno in a family with peace-loving members.

We are introduced to Kundanlal, an elderly man, with Krishna as his shrewish wife. They have two living sons, a daughter and two daughters-in-law. From the last quantity one is a widow with two children.

Kundanlal is shown as henpecked and attributes all happenings to the God's will because of the shrewish temperament of his wife.

When the story opens, the eldest son, Vinod, is married to Shanti while Anjali, the daughter of the family, nurses her own husband in her father's house. Between the mother and the daughter, Shanti and the other widowed daughter-in-law are provided with a life of hell.

Vilas, the happy-go-lucky younger son of the family, respects none else

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MAZHAR KHAN
WITH
CHANDRAPRABHA
NANDREKAR
DIXIT AND
BABY SHAKUNTALA

IN
BASANT PICTURES'

"Bachpan"

PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY

HOMI WADIA

WHO GAVE YOU "VISHVAS"

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than Shanti, the wife of his brother. After showing the usual time-honoured sequences in which the mother-in-law showers on the daughters-in-law insult and abuse with the help of the daughter, we are taken to the usual sequence in which a bride is searched for the younger son. After some twist in the game, Vilas agrees to marry Urmi, who ultimately turns out to be rather a smart girl.

The elder son Vinod is shown as returning home after a long business trip with a girl called Sumitra. Finding the old dog-and-cat atmosphere at home, this boy develops nerves which he ultimately takes to Sumitra for soothing. Vinod is thus shown as estranged from his wife and family. By this time Vilas and Urmi are husband and wife and Urmi sets the ball rolling by defying her mother-in-law.

The drama now suddenly reaches a climax in which Sumitra's intentions towards Vinod are misunderstood. Vinod, who is love-struck, ill-treats his own wife and for a time behaves like a cad. Urmi and Vilas give their father some monkey-gland treatment and make him young again to face his shrewish wife.

Very soon there is general showdown in which the old woman is chastised and Vinod is reclaimed. It all ends as funnily as all such silly stories have ended before.

The scenario of the story is pretty well worked out and the tempo of the direction is kept fast. Though there is not a single outstanding touch of great direction anywhere, the picture could be said to have been directed pretty well and pretty consistently. Some of the dialogues are pointed and refreshing. The music is mediocre and so are the song compositions. Sound and photography are a few shades better than primitive. The general finish of the picture is crude and poor. The theme, however, has a human appeal inspite of the exaggerated melodrama in several situations.

HULLO, RAJKUMARI SHUKLA

From the players, Rajkumari Shukla provides the pivot of the whole affair. Though her work has nothing subtle in it, she has given a good melodramatic performance as the traditional shrew. She speaks her dialogues well and backs her words with equally fanatical gestures.

Yakub, in the role of Vilas, plays his favourite part with his usual artistry.

Kaushalya has for the first time done credit to the role given to her. She gives a good account of herself as Urmi.

Sulochana Chatterjee plays the meek Hindu 'cow' by showing the least resistance in the role of Shanti.

Pygmy-sized Yashodhara Katju plays the role that fits her like a glove and strangely enough does it very well for the first time in her screen career.

Gope, Syed Ahmed, Mirza Musharaff and Leela Misra do their parts pretty well.

The only dullards of the play are Trilok Kapoor and Husna Banu. Half the time they did not seem to know what they were about.

Stories with such themes have succeeded at the box-offices before and "Aina" should do well as a small money-maker. But is that any reason why pictures like "Aina" should be produced?

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OUR REVIEW

"Bhishma" Hits The Headlines !

Sastry's Remarkable Performance!

The story of Bhishma, the militant celibate of mythology, has a popular appeal in the South. Though Bhishma has no divine halo round him for people to worship him, there is still enough hero-worship for this popular warrior of mythology.

When Director Narayanamurthy therefore took up this subject, its box-office was assured in advance. "Bhishma" has already hit the headlines and the knowing ones say that it will break the records established by "Mangamma" and "Bhakta Potana".

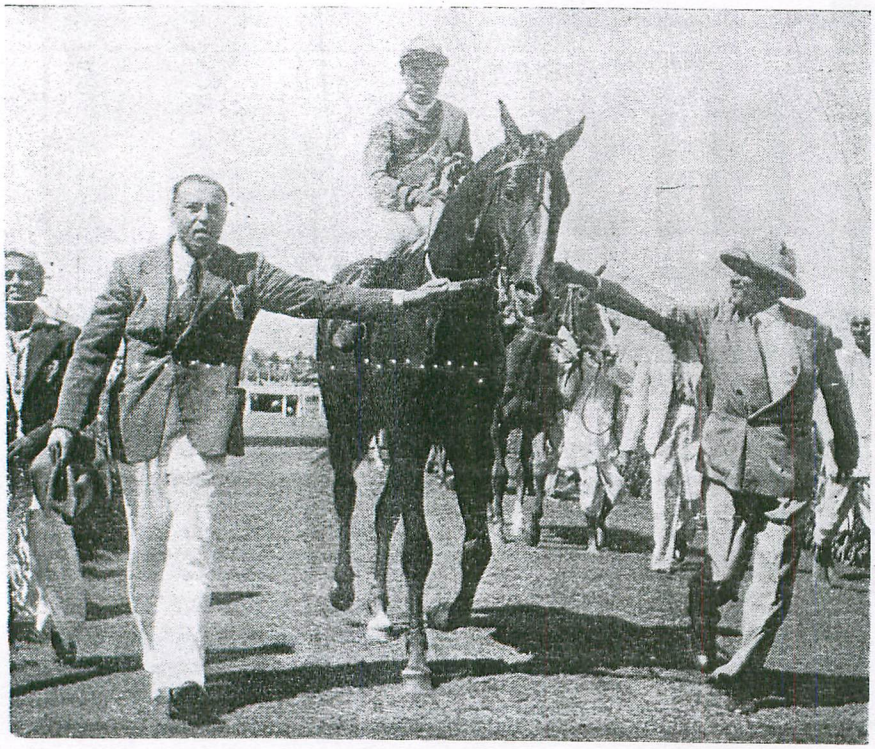
Though the story travels with the help of usual well-known incidents, the director seems to have wasted a lot of footage on minor incidents like the love scenes of Ganga-Santana, Matsyagandhi-Santana, etc., while lending less emphasis to Bhishma's individual character as seen in his duel with Parashuram, in the part he plays in Kuru-Pandava differences and the never-to-be-forgotten interlude between him and Lord Krishna in the Kurukshetra battlefield.

The story has been crowded with many incidents, some of them with little dramatic value. The picture travels pretty well before the interval, but after the interval it drags a bit and does not remain so interesting.

BHISHMA

Producers: **Sobhanachala Pictures.**
Language: **Telugu.**
Story, Dialogues & Songs: **B. T. N. Chari & Baljepalli.**
Music: **P. Satyanarana and G. N. Rao.**
Photography: **D. Kotnis.**
Audiography: **B. Valkie.**
Cast: **J. G. Sastry, C. S. R. Anjaneyulu, Krishnaveni, Lakshmirajyam, etc.**
Released At: **Maruti, Bezwada.**
Date of Release: **11th Feb., 1945.**
Director:
C. NARAYAN MURTY.

The scene showing Salva Bhupathi's drunkenness is rather objectionable and hardly does any credit to the otherwise intelligent treatment of the picture by the director.



"Filmindia", the best-looking Indian-bred, who won the Coleyana Plate at Mahaluxmi on 27th February, was led in by its joint owners Messrs. Baburao Patel and D. K. Parker, the people who also own "Filmindia", your popular magazine.

Prithviraj looks a milkman in Dassera costume in "Phool".

SASTRY'S DESTRUCTIVE PERFORMANCE!

The best cast in the picture was that of Jandhyala Gourinath Sastry in the role of "Bhishma". He gives a remarkably good performance and speaks and sings beautifully. He was, however, provided restricted scope in his scenes with Lord Krishna on the battlefield.

C. S. R. Anjaneyulu robbed Lord Krishna of his traditional halo and divinity by playing the role in "Bhishma". His performance constitutes an outrage on our age-old sentiments of reverence for Lord Krishna. In the battlefield scene, he acts like a stage buffoon and only helps to prove some dormant stupidity in the director.

Krishnaveni does well as Amba, though she looks less personable than one would like to imagine a heroine of a motion picture.

Sreeranjani gives a future promise in the role of "Satyavati". Less said about Sarita and Prayaga, the better. They make faces which compel people to ask for refunds.

The production values are mediocre. The work of Cameraman Kotnis and Recordist Valkie, however, deserves praise because they are reported to have worked in rather indifferent environments.

"Bhishma" should run well all over the South, because in addition to some slick direction in parts, there is some good music to hear in the picture.

OUR REVIEW

"Maha Maya" Fails To Entertain !

Kannamba Impresses Favourably !

Revival Of An Age-Old Story !

Motion pictures in Tamil are usually dominated by three principal factors: An all star cast costing several thousands, singing Bhagavathars and their opposites in sex and the stupid slap-stick of the Krishnan-Madhuram team. The last factor; incidentally helps to establish the mental age of the South Indian film-goers.

"Maha Maya" has all these factors of success and in addition the traditional reactionary theme of the glorious Hindu womanhood which goes through innumerable acid tests and always emerges with a triumph which provides a moral to everything that lives in a sari.

Stories like these are usually thrown against a fantastic background. Most of them are legends which tired and toothless old hags tell their juniors with a religious relish between the cooking hours.

Maha Maya, a princess of Gandhara and Vikramsinha, a princeling of another place, study under the same guru during their childhood. In their gambols of childhood, the girl playfully puts a garland of flowers round Vikram's sword, without realising its real significance as the symbol of marital union between the two.

Later on Maha Maya is married to Nandagupta of Maghada desa and Vikram is married to another woman called, Manorama Devi. One day Maha Maya and Vikram meet accidentally. Vikram follows Maha Maya and ultimately insists on her hand reminding her of the sword-and-garland incident. Goaded by passion Vikram does not hear of the prayers and the appeals of Maha Maya.

Vikram ultimately kidnaps her and takes her to his kingdom. There the woman goes through the usual time-honoured tortures which many of our professional satis are reported to have gone through. Ultimately Maha Maya escapes, of course, untouched by human hands like Mellin's Food, but her husband Nandagupta does not believe this story and turns round and calls his own wife a prostitute.

Now the Sita-Savitri test is introduced. Maha Maya kills her only child and kills herself and according to Hindu notions this double homicidal woman goes to the heavens. Evidently, in the olden times, they accommodated criminals also in the Paradise.

We have no objection to this silly story if the majority of film-goers in the South wish to see stuff like this. But we do object to the irresponsible use which producers in the South are making of their opportunity to use the motion picture as a social and purposeful force in the life of their people.

Toothless old hags and double-dyed priests of the South may welcome this stuff as a solid contribution to perpetuate the old order. We, however, condemn it.

Forgetting for a while the theme of the picture, we must admit that the dialogues of the picture are forcibly and pointedly written though some of the sentiments are repeated too often thus making several situations unnecessarily boring. This is, perhaps, due to the fact that the dialogue-writer also happened to be an associate director of the picture.

The production values are mediocre. Some sets do look a bit huge but bad photography has helped to kill all the grandeur. The sound recording is not so bad. There is hardly any attractive music in the picture throughout.

KANNAMBA IMPRESSES

From the players, Kannamba, in the role of Maha Maya, scores top honours very easily. She looks the part and delivers her dialogues very well. One, however, does not like to see so much of her nostrils and eye-brows unnecessarily. The Rajput costume suits her well and brings out her curves pretty attractively. Kannamba does so well that whatever little success the picture will achieve will be entirely due to her.

Chinappa looks idiotic as Vikram. From his performance, it seems that what he knows of acting is just not worth knowing. Kannamba swallows him completely. Even his music fails to appeal.

M. G. Chakrapani, as "Neela", the evil genius, gives a remarkably convincing performance. Here is an artiste with a brilliant future, a man who can act and who knows what he is doing.

The Krishnan-Madhuram team bores one stiff with their usual, purposeless antics.

In short, the picture hardly has any music or sex-appeal and it bores badly at places. "Maha Maya" can be called a moderate stuff without much entertainment.

MAHA MAYA

Producers: Jupiter Studios.
Language: Tamil.
Story & Dialogues: Elangoovan.
Music: Venkataramier.
Photography: M. Bartley.
Audiography: T. T. Arasu.
Cast: P. Kannamba, P. U. C. Bhagavathar, Meenalochani, Saroja, Krishnan, Madhuram, etc.
Released At: Paragon, Madras.
Date of Release: 16th Feb., 1945.

Direction:
T. RAGHUNATH & ELANGOOVAN.

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OUR REVIEW

"Gaali" Presents Disappointing Entertainment

Writer-director Ruins The Motion Picture

"Gaali" is a picture which in itself constitutes a severe abuse of the motion picture art considered from any angle whatever. From the beginning to the end, the picture remains a complete mess of confused ideas with an occasional punctuation of some pointed dialogues throwing a sidelight on some of the maladjustments of society.

It seems that the writer set out to tell something great and something emotional and in doing so completely forgot his theme and arrived at some pseudo-intellectual conclusions.

The story of "Gaali" is about a child widow and her plight in Indian society. In this case, the widow is both young and blind and the writer wants us to believe that her plight is more intense than usual because of her double affliction. The picture opens with a flash back telling the story of Mangala and the village she lived in, now both in ruins. Mangala, a young and blind widow, lived in the home of her father-in-law, Jaggu Chowdhary. In the same home was Lali, the younger sister of her dead husband. To Lali, Mangala was the mother. Jaggu Chowdhary wanted Lali to get married to Tilak, a local landlord who was both modern and educated. Somehow Tilak doesn't get interested in Lali so much and finds himself drawn towards the blind Mangala. One day, he touches the young widow and we are told that Tilak and Mangala begin to love each other thereafter. In the orthodox village, this provides enough material for a scandal and the scandal is in turn fanned by Baldeo, a local bad man. Baldeo has his eyes on Lali, but Lali in her turn is interested in Tilak and chases Tilak from place to place with her heart in her hands.

The chase which Lali gives to Tilak is anything but Hindu-like. Almost at every stage these sequences smell of sex and suggestiveness and at places become definitely lewd.

The scandal about Tilak and Mangala progresses fast till it leads to a free fight between Jaggu Chowdhary and the villagers. In this fight Jaggu Chowdhary is killed and Lali is left alone in the world because before this fight Mangala and Tilak had left the village together.

M. Ismail and Durga Khote create some tense drama in "Panna Dai", a Pradeep picture.

GAALI

Producers: N. R. Desai Productions
Language: Hindustani
Story & Dialogues: R. S. Chowdhary
Lyrics: Madhok, Indra & others
Music: Hanuman Prasad and Sajjad Hussain
Photography: B. S. Jagirdar
Audiography: Indravadan Desai
Cast: Nirmala, Yakub, Karan Diwan, Kanhaiyalal, Manju and others.
Released At: Lamington, Bombay.
Date of Release: 22nd Dec. 1944
Directed By
CHOWDHARY

Now the story goes through the usual synthetically emotional situations and we see some tame love-making between Mangala and Tilak in an obscure temple. Here Mangala gets back her eye-sight due to an accident and she discovers that the man she loved was not her husband. A few emotional but silly dialogues break the chords of spiritual union between Mangala and Tilak and ultimately the whole thing ends by Tilak taking Lali while Mangala retires to a life of resignation.

The entire story is a jumble of several ideas and Chowdhary has failed to deliver the goods all throughout. The story went out of the writer's hands completely in his attempt to portray several local characters in the village.

From the players, Kanhaiyalal gives an excellent performance as Banke Thakur, while Yakub maintains his usual laurels as Baldeo in a role which fits him like a glove. Nirmala is not much as Mangala though she looks a pretty good widow. Manju, who plays the role of Lali, overacts all the time and does it a bit thickly in suggestive situations. Owing to the tender age of this girl, these suggestive situations fail to appeal.

The photography is erratic and so is the sound.

The musical part of the picture provided only some common tunes which have been heard before several times.

In short, the picture fails to appeal because of the confused story and entirely indifferent direction by Chowdhary.

SHALIMAR PICTURES (Poona)

More reports have come in about "Mun-Ki-Jeet" which was released in Lahore. All these reports are very enthusiastic and it seems to be an irony of fate that pictures suddenly start running well when their original producers sell them out.

At the studios in Poona, Producer-director W. Z. Ahmed is reported to be cutting, inch by inch, his new picture "Ghulami" which has a freedom theme for this slavish country. Featuring Renuka Devi, who comes to the screen after a pretty long time, and many other leading artistes, Director Wadhwani is reported to have made "Ghulami" a rare and thrilling entertainment.

Two other pictures on the sets are ambitious costume subjects called, "Shree Krishna Bhagwan" and "Prithviraj Sanjogita". We do not know when exactly these pictures will see the light of day but with a little luck, filmgoers ought to be able to see one of them before the end of the year.

FAMOUS FILMS (Bombay)

The last trials of Producer Abdullah's "Phool" have been taken and everyone seems to be in a gala mood, seeing the good job that Director Asif has made of this subject. Featuring Veena, Prithviraj, Sitara and others, the picture is expected to be the popular choice of filmgoers in 1945.

EASTERN PICTURES (Bombay)

It is reported that Director Shaukat Hussein is doing double shifts to complete "Zeenat" which is evidently a social story with Yakub, Noor Jehan and Dixit in the lead. If all goes well with expectations, the picture should be in hand before the end of March.

ROHINI PICTURES (Bombay)

It is difficult to say in how many productions Phani Majumdar is concerned. Inspite of his delicate, tender frame, he seems to be the hardest-worked film executive in the town today. A picture, which we are told, is progressing under his direction "steadily and for which he is turning all the stones up" is "Justice", a social story featuring Charlie, K. C. De, David and that unavoidable Suvarnalata.

Babu Phani Majumdar threatens to complete the picture before the end of March.

VENUS PICTURES (Bombay)

It is a mystery how Producer Lakhmidas Anand came to inherit the unique talent of organizing big production problems and concluding them successfully seeing that in life he shows the least aptitude for such big deals.

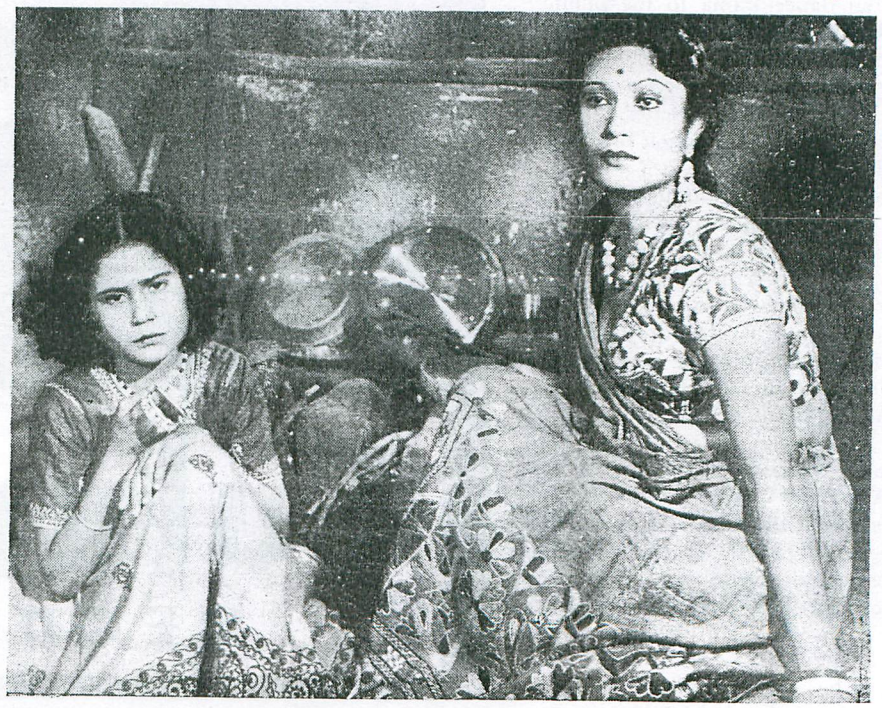
The latest story about him is that he has roped in Kananbala, the well-known Bengali artiste, for a dizzy sum of two lakhs. Someone has to pay a huge income-tax on this amount. It seems that she is being brought in for a picture called "Krishna Leela" and as we are sure that Kanan will not make a good Krishna, she is likely to be the singing Radha.

With Kanan in the lead, Producer Anand ought to be able to sell the picture rights even before the first still is taken.

SHOREY PICTURES (Lahore)

Producer Roop Shorey has given us the secret of his story, "Shalimar" this time. He says that Emperor Jehangir hardly slept and we believe him knowing that he had Noor Jehan for his wife. Then he continues by stating that Jehangir helped some lovers to conclude their romance and took a kindly interest in such romantic subjects "Shalimar", therefore, promises to be a romantic affair with Jehangir not sleeping and acting as go-between during his spare hours. The persons who create all this mysterious drama are Manorama, Chandramohan, Begum Para and Pramilla.

We must wait to see this picture when it is ready, as it is intensely difficult to find out from the studio news sent to us what exactly Roop



Baby Madhuri and Kanta have a disturbed moment in "Bachpan", a Basant Picture.

Shorey is about in fiddling with the subject "Shalimar".

MAZHAR ART PRODUCTIONS (Bombay)

Producer Mazhar Khan is reported to be extremely busy with his Muslim costume picture, "Pehli Nazar". It is supposed to be a domestic story of some Nawabs of Ouun. With Veena in the leading role and with several other new names to support her, Mazhar expects the picture to click at the box offices, more so because Anil Biswas is in charge of the music. The co-operation of Bombay Talkies in this respect is praiseworthy.

DARYANI PRODUCTIONS (Bombay)

Producer K. S. Daryani is reported to have completed "Preet", a social story which is directed by his younger brother Ram Daryani. As the Senior Daryani is a well-known story-writer and the junior one a sensible director, we expect "Preet" to be a picture worth the trouble. Featuring Snehaprabha Pradhan and the inevitable Suvarnalata. Daryani's social plot presents some highly emotional situations.

JAYANT FILMS (Bombay)

Producer-director Babubhai Jani seems to be a bit worried about the release of "Urvashi", which costume picture has now been lying ready since a month. Featuring Sadhona Bose and Mrs. Shobhana Samarth, "Urvashi" is expected to provide a thrilling dance-drama to the public.

BOMBAY CINETONE (Bombay)

Producer K. B. Lall, kicked up into prominence by the success of "Lal Haveli", is going one better this time in planning the production of "Samrat Ashok".

Producer Lall has induced the Prabhat people to hire out their studios for the first time and has thus secured some excellent settings for his new picture. Whatever may be the ultimate quality of "Samrat Ashok", Producer Lall must be congratulated for dragging the Prabhat people into the hiring business and thus helping them to recover a part of their production expenses.

JANAK PICTURES (Bombay)

Producer Chhotubhai Desai, despite his personal shuttle service between Bombay and Delhi for Production Licences, has been able to proceed with a lot of work regarding his picture "Nal Damayanti".

Featuring Mrs. Shobhana Samarth, and of course directed by Mr. Kumarsen Samarth, "Nal Damayanti" should appeal to all family audiences because of its primary family touch during production. The other people, outside the family, who feature, are Prithviraj and David.

AMAR PICTURES (Bombay)

Producer Chimanlal Desai is putting all his eggs in a new costume basket called, "Ratnavali". With Surendra leading a useful cast and with Bulbul Desai wielding the megaphone, "Ratnavali" is expected to hit the bull's eye at the box-offices. We hope it does for the sake of the veteran producer.

MANSATA FILM DISTRIBUTORS (Calcutta)

These people have two pictures for distribution: "Taqrar" produced by Art Film Productions, starring Jamuna, and "Two Sisters" produced by M. P. Productions, starring Kananbala.

PRADEEP PICTURES (Bombay)

Mrs. Kamlabai Mangalorekar, the producer of "Panna Dai" has been able to secure a release theatre in Bombay, with the help of her financiers. "Panna Dai" is therefore expected to be on the screen sometime in the month of March.

Mrs. Mangalorekar is now preparing for her next picture, "Rukmini Swayamvar".

JAGRITI PICTURES (Bombay)

This new company is reported to be producing a story, from the Arabian nights which they have named. "Song Of The Desert". The plot has an Arabic background and we are told that Mr. C. Ramachandra, the music-director, will be giving some original Arabic tunes.

RANJIT MOVIETONE (Bombay)

"Vish Kanya" is running at the Opera House. After this will be released "Caravan" featuring Kamla Chatterjee and directed by Aspi.

The studios at Dadar are busy as usual. Kedar Sharma has completed "Chand Chakori", featuring Mumtaz Shanti. Simultaneously this man is also busy with "Dhana Bhagat", a devotional picture featuring Kamla Chatterjee and with "Mumtaz" featuring Chandramohan and Khurshid.

Evidently Mr. Chandulal Shah does not bother much about quality, seeing that a single person is entrusted with so many pictures.

Another picture that is under shooting is "Shabnam" under the direction of Mirza and featuring Khurshid.

ADVANCE FILM EXCHANGE (Bombay)

These people are reported to have completed "Adhar", a social story featuring Yakub and Kokila and directed by Ramanlal Desai. The world rights of this picture have been secured by Everest Pictures of Lahore.

BASANT PICTURES (Bombay)

The latest news from the sets of Producer-director Homi Wadia is that the last shootings of "Bachpan" are being done. This is a social story featuring Baby Madhuri and Mazhar Khan. Messrs. Bhatt and company have secured the world rights of this picture.

BHAVNANI PRODUCTIONS (Bombay)

Producer Mohan Bhavnani has at last completed "Bisvi Sadi" a novel social story starring Motilal, Nargis and Mazhar Khan.

Bhavnani's future programme is not yet known.

STAR PRODUCTIONS (Bombay)

Producer Mrs. Ratan Bai Begg, who can talk nineteen to anybody's dozen on every subject under the sun, has completed her social picture, "Dasi" or "Ma".

She is now busy with a new one called "Dharma" which picture is expected to be ready by the end of next month. After this Ratan Bai threatens to produce another called "Duaa".

NAVYUG CHITRAPAT (Poona)

"Panna", a propaganda story, is only waiting for a release theatre. At the studios, a social subject called "Din Raat" is on the floor with Sneha-prabha Pradhan and Paresh Bannerji in the cast.

STANDARD PICTURES (Bombay)

Producer M. Havewalla is all on toes these days with his new historical picture "Bairam Khan". The shooting of this picture has already begun at the Minerva studios and will probably end at the Prabhat Studios where some special sets will be taken. Placed under the direction of Jagirdar, "Bairam Khan" has a pretty assorted cast in Mehtab, David, Ghulam Mohammed, Lalita Pawar and others. It is a story written by Hakim Ahmed Shujaa of Lahore, while the music is in charge of Ghulam Haider.

VAUHINI PICTURES (Madras)

Director B. N. Reddy is on his own this time without Ramnath and Sekhar. This is perhaps the reason why "Swargaseema" is still on the floor since the last fourteen months. Perhaps Reddy is missing his old team work. Featuring Nagiah, Jayamma and Bhanumati and a man named Lingamurti, it is expected that this social story of a tom-boyish village girl will do well at the box-offices.

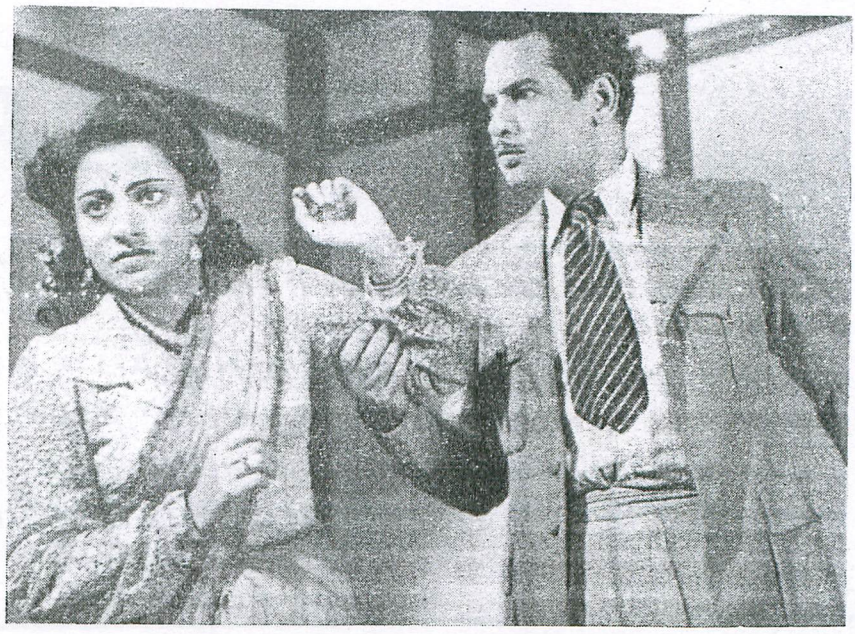
Another picture they have in view is "Yogi Veemana", the paper work of which is reported to have been completed.

FAMOUS CINE AND STAR COMBINES (Madras)

These F.C. and S.C. producers of the South are giving finishing touches to "Maya Machindra" which is being produced at Kolhapur, under the guidance of A. Ramiah. The picture features Kannamba and Gourinath Sastry and is directed by Pullayya.

SRI RENUKA FILMS (Madras)

Encouraged by the success of "Bhagyalakshmi", Chittoor V. Nagiah, the well-known singer of the south is



Jairaj has caught Kusum at something in "Panna", a Navyug picture. Kusum has always been like that.

working on a musical story called, "Saint Thyagiah". A lot of boosting of this picture seems to have been done in advance and Nagiah is heard thinking loudly that he will be able to do better than his previous successes.

SARADHI FILMS (Madras)

Producer G. Ramabrahmam, who recently made a lot of noise by giving some fantastic ideas for the post-war planning of the film industry, is reported to be busy with a costume picture called "Mayalokam". It features Kannamba, Kamla Kotnis and several others.

People say that there are more selected beauties in this single picture (of course, of southern taste) than in half-a-dozen pictures in the town. Coffee Narsu (without any chicory) is reported to have purchased this picture even before Ramabrahmam stepped on the sets. That proves that one can purchase celluloid with a lot of coffee.

SRI JAGDISH FILMS (Madras)

Y. V. Rao is reported to have completed the preliminary work of his future picture "Jagannadh Panditaraya". The shooting is expected to begin from April.

Veena plays the lead in "Phool", a picture of Famous Films.

GEMINI STUDIOS (Madras)

S. S. Vasan, who is better known by the ruling planet in his horoscope, is once again suspected of taking up horse-racing just because he has entrusted his production activities to Ramnath.

The studios are busy producing some Tamil pictures which have not been christened yet.

At the studios, the Raja Rajeswari people have completed some Telugu stuff with that jaw-breaking name, "Padukapattabhishekam." This jaw-breaker will be released on the 14th March and should provide good practice to the dental surgeons in the south.

CHANDRAPRABHA CINETONE (Madras)

Sadasivam, of M. S. Subbulakshmi fame, is still at "Bhakta Meera" featuring his wife. Under the direction of Ellis Dungan, this production is already two years old and people expect it to be released as a post-war contribution of Sadasivam. In a way, it is not a bad idea, as after the defeat of the Germans and the Japanese, the South Indian Kokilagana can have 20,000 feet of celluloid to stretch her voice from end to end.

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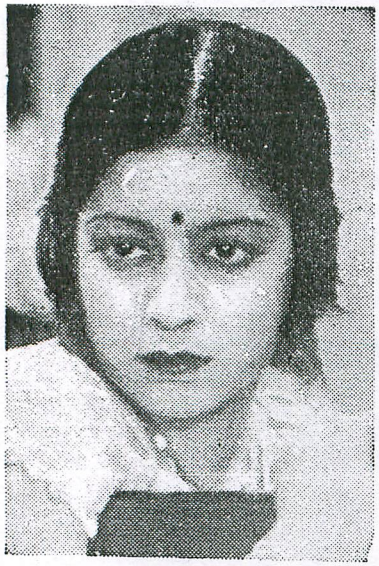

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